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*MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
AND THEIR MUSIC*

1500-1750

By GERALD R. HAYES



II

THE VIOLS, AND OTHER
BOWED INSTRUMENTS

With an Introduction by
ARNOLD DOLMETSCH

'The Generous Viol, in Its Rightest Use. . .'

THOMAS MACE

Musick's Monument

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON : HUMPHREY MILFORD
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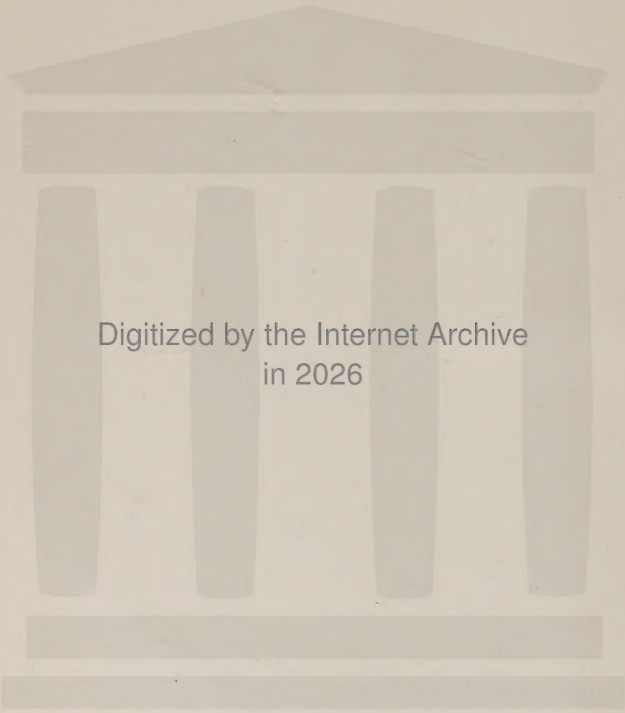
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THIS SERIES HAS BEEN
DEDICATED TO THE
MEMORY OF MY
FATHER

Et tout ainsi comme l'amour de pere à filz est
incomparable avecques les amytez communes ...
AMADIS DE GAULE, *Le Septiesme Livre* (1546)



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PREFACE

THE long delay in the appearance of this volume demands both explanation and apology. A completed version of the book was discarded in favour of a more rigid separation of the subject-matter, and in this second version there has been a multitude of amendments, additions, and compressions. Since it makes no pretence to be an encyclopaedia of bowed instruments, I have passed over with little more than a mention certain items (as, for example, the Crwth) about which I have nothing of practical importance to add to, or to take away from, what is already available in reference books.

I should like to record how much more I now feel my indebtedness to those to whom I referred in the General Preface to the Series, which was printed with the previous volume. Mr. Arnold Dolmetsch has spared nothing in his endeavour to ensure that the book should be one to which he could set his Introduction with full confidence. With great kindness, he has read through this work both in manuscript and in proof; the suggestions that have come from his practical outlook and immense experience have been of the utmost value to me. I am especially grateful to Mr. Marco Pallis for his very practical assistance in solving a deadlock that bid fair to postpone the issue of this volume indefinitely.

To the names already mentioned, it is fitting that two should be added here. I have to thank Mr. W. J. H. Whittall, not only for permission to photograph and describe his viol, but for his great kindness in easing my work by the loan of many rare and precious volumes from his fine collection. This book owes very much to him. And I have been

PREFACE

fortunate in having the collaboration of a scholarly typist. Mr. F. C. White's ability to evolve a correct typescript from my handwriting is an unfailing source of wonder to me. Not only has he handled all the difficult quotations with confidence, but in more than one he has pulled me up in a slip of the pen. My sincere thanks are due to him.

G. R. H.

February, 1930.

INTRODUCTION

WITHOUT musical instruments, Music could not exist. Their sounds, technique, limitations even, are the foundation and framework of Music.

Their innumerable varieties, their transformations, are intimately connected with the musical ideals and fashions of all times and countries.

This is true also of the human voice, for the singer unconsciously imitates the sounds of the instruments he hears.

A Jacobean singer's voice and manner of singing did not resemble what we hear on the concert platforms, any more than the latter resembles a Hindu singer.

The study of the Music of any period should, therefore, be based upon that of the instruments of the same period.

Hitherto, this subject has not been treated seriously. The most authoritative books abound with errors, suppositions, mistranslations, and prejudiced statements. They do not help the revival of Old Music.

The present book, it is hoped, will do so. Inspired by faith and love, it is the result of an immense amount of research. Every known source of information has been investigated. The conclusions are based exclusively upon contemporary evidence, unbiased by prejudiced or preconceived ideas. I have studied this book in the light of a long life of practical experience, and I can say that I have not found a doubtful word or phrase in it, which means that the mass of information contained in the book is trustworthy.

It will prove of inestimable value to all interested in this fascinating subject.

When new discoveries are made, they will bring nearer completion a structure already well raised. The foundations will remain unshakable.

ARNOLD DOLMETSCH.

February 1930.

NOTE

THE quotations in this book are given, as far as possible, upon the principle that there should be no 'silent amendment' of the original text, in even the least detail of spelling, accent, or punctuation. If any errors have escaped me, in spite of revisions, I can only hope that they will be few in number and unimportant in material.

G. R. H.

LIST OF AUTHORITIES QUOTED IN THIS BOOK

The * placed before nine of the items indicates that these works were not accessible to me and that the quotations had to be taken from other sources.

(F) before an item indicates that a facsimile reproduction is available.

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|-----|----------------|--|
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| 3. | * 1523. | Judenkünig. <i>Ain schöne kunstliche vnderweisung.</i> |
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Thanks for permission and facilities for photography are due to Mr. W. J. H. Whittall for Plate I; to Mr. Arnold Dolmetsch for Plates II, III, V, X, and XI; and to Mr. M. A. Pallis for Plate IV. Plate IX is reproduced by kind permission of the curator of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

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PROLOGUE

PROLOGUE

§ i.

BEFORE entering upon a detailed study of the bowed instruments, it is necessary to realize their position at the opening of our period. Towards medieval times, the materials of evidence are both scanty and uncertain, but from the beginning of the sixteenth century precise knowledge becomes possible.

In the year 1500 we find in use three distinct families of bowed instruments, and of each a long history can be glimpsed in the centuries preceding. These families represent lines of development that are fundamentally separate. They had arrived at a maturity of form, constructed by a craftsmanship that was unsurpassed by the finest hands of later times. But while one preserved its purity of conception in spirit and substance, the others were to shed much of their individuality upon the advent of a new type.

Beside these three principals, the VIOL, the LYRA, and the REBEC, there stand several isolated figures, stray offshoots in the evolution of instruments of the bow. Though sterile, some of these had an activity that cannot be ignored.

§ ii.

The viols had early won their way to aristocracy and for long held their position as the instruments, above all others, most suited to the highest forms of concerted music.

The lyras at this time had scarcely passed their meridian, and they had yet a century of honour to come before they were to fade from our scene.

The rebecs—once, like the lyras, the attribute of angels—were already descending to become the voice of the less dignified occasions of pleasure. A few examples of part-music

PROLOGUE

for them survive from this period, indicative of past greatness. But they were soon to take their place as the instruments of borel folk, and, in *Romeo and Juliet*, Hugh Rebeck personifies associations from which they did not recover.

Then, somewhere in the first half of the sixteenth century, there appeared a new instrument, for the parentage of which both lyra and rebec may have been in some measure responsible. After an infancy of ignominy, it came to an adolescence of bitter conflict with the stately viols. From this the new-comer emerged as victor, full grown in quality and influence. Its defeated rivals and their music were thrust into a limbo of the forgotten from whence they are only now being recalled, to speak again those thoughts that the conquering VIOLIN had all but obliterated.

§ iii.

In the previous volume it has been explained that our attention must be given chiefly to the practical nature and use of the instruments. We shall not take more than a cursory look farther back upon what must, with our available data, be matters in which speculation replaces certainty.

Although for clarity the instruments must be examined as separate types, it should not be forgotten that they are but parts of one picture which must be seen as a whole for true understanding of the subject. We treat of a springtime age in history when there had developed from the Renaissance that flower of progressive invention characteristic of the sixteenth century. The great issues in so many and diverse spheres that were then being fought out are reflected in the whole European music of the times. We feel throughout a spiritual homogeneity, ineluctable if elusive of definition. Before the end of that century the strands were unravelling to form more distinct curves of nationality. Some tended slowly upward, while others sank in an undulation of decadence and

PROLOGUE

experiment until they found confidence again in newer forms. In England the curve rose to a height of unparalleled achievement. It collapsed almost suddenly to a nadir of unnatural dependence upon imported idiom, from which emancipation was not sought until the present century.

This epic of success, contest, and change must be visualized as overshadowing all our analysis of contributory detail.

BOOK I
THE VIOLS

PART I. THE CONSORT VIOLS

PART II. THE VIOL AS A SOLO INSTRUMENT

PART I

THE CONSORT VIOLS

CHAPTER I

THE FORM AND THE SUBSTANCE: TUNING

§ i.

IN the study of the VIOLS we must begin with a description of the Form, the essential character by which they may be defined; upon this follows the Substance, the detailed application of matter, harmonic and material, to the postulate outline; finally, Form and Substance articulate, creating the Spirit, or the music of viols.

§ ii.

Those elements that combine together to make a viol must be considered in two aspects, the one absolute and the other, for present convenience, in relation to the violins.

Those absolute are:

- (1) The number of the strings.
- (2) The tuning of the strings.
- (3) The gut frets upon the finger-board.
- (4) The manner of bowing.

And, relative to the family of the violins,

- (5) The strings are lighter, longer, and less tense.
- (6) The wood is much thinner throughout.
- (7) The ribs, especially in the smaller instruments, are usually deeper.

No mention is made here of those features of bodily shape that have so often been given for identification of a viol. Historians of the violin, too, have not infrequently pursued similitudes of outline in the sixteenth century to the confusion

THE CONSORT VIOLS

of their object. With the viols, fashions throughout three centuries changed; with the violins, once a form was determined, fashion has decreed that this should be revered. Upon this, more will be said later.

§ iii.

The standard number of strings upon viols of all sizes is six.

There is, happily, no occasion here to produce evidence other than that of the surviving instruments, for specimens dating from the middle of the fifteenth century are so fitted. Substantiation of this, were it necessary, could be adduced from those numerous authorities who, throughout the whole of the period of our view, gave instructions for the tuning of viols.

Yet from these same authorities may be inferred occasional variations. Thus two at least, Agricola in 1528 and Hans Gerle in 1532, define viols, more especially in the upper voices, with but five strings. For a period towards the end of the first half of the sixteenth century we gather, from Agricola in 1528 and Ganassi in 1543, that, as a passing feature, four, and even only three, strings were at times used.¹ That this did not persist is shown by the manner in which Praetorius refers to the practice in 1618, but the slight illumination it throws upon the dark ages of the violin will impel further reference at a later stage of this book.

As this century closes, bass instruments occur with an additional string at the lower end of the range. Jean Rousseau, in 1687, attributes the invention of this to St. Colombe, a famous French violist of the seventeenth century; it is clear from a comparison of dates that the sole honour cannot be granted here, but St. Colombe may have been the influence that gained the wide acceptance of the extra string upon the Continent during the succeeding hundred years.

¹ See *infra*, pp. 162 et seq.; and Appendix III.

THE TUNING

The circle is completed by the later French viols of the eighteenth century when trebles and altos were sometimes made with five strings only.

§ iv.

The tuning of the strings of the consort viols of all sizes, except the violone, is, irrespective of pitch, invariable.

Between the 1st and 2nd strings—a fourth.

,,	,,	<i>2nd and 3rd</i>	,,	<i>—a fourth.</i>
,,	,,	<i>3rd and 4th</i>	,,	<i>—a major third.</i>
,,	,,	<i>4th and 5th</i>	,,	<i>—a fourth.</i>
,,	,,	<i>5th and 6th</i>	,,	<i>—a fourth.</i>

The contemporary writers have left information perfectly clear and consistent upon the tuning of viols. It was built up of that combination of fourth and major third that has shown itself one of the most useful arrangements of intervals, for a period of many centuries, for numerous types of instruments.

Neither Virdung, the father of all who write upon instruments of music, nor his translator, Nachtgall, states the tuning of the viols he depicts.¹ It is to Martin Sore, *sive Agricola*, that we are to look for the first certain news;² and his intervals are not quite regular in their positions:

Discant: *f a d' g' c''*

Alto and

Tenor: *c f a d' g'*

Bass: *G c f a d' g'*

Observing the tunings which follow, from the almost synchronous work of Hans Gerle, it may be conjectured that

¹ Sebastian Virdung, *Musica Getutscht*, Basle, 1511. Ottomar Luscinius, *Præcepta seu praxis Musicae*, Strassburg, 1536.
² Martin Agricola, *Musica instrumentalis deudsch*, Wittemberg, 1528/9.

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the arrangements of both were parochial in time and situation. When Agricola came to re-write entirely his work for the fourth edition of 1545, he omitted the tuning of the 'grossen Welschen geigen'. Note, however, the pitch of his discant.

The information given by Hans Gerle¹ tends to a more consistent system and his lower pitch was to receive later support from the works of Praetorius and Cerone. Though he gives the actual notes for but five strings, it is clear from his diagrams and discussion that he also legislated for six-stringed instruments, wherein the additional string was a fourth below the lowest of the five defined.²

Discant:	<i>d</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>e'</i>	<i>a'</i>
Tenor:	<i>G</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>d'</i>
Bass:	<i>D</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>a</i> ³

It may be that yet another local variation had been shown a few years before by Judenkünig.⁴

Of France at this date we can quote no definitive authority; for the statement made, a hundred and fifty years later, by Jean Rousseau is not to be identified either in evidence or period, and is, perhaps, not to be taken too seriously:

Les premieres Violes dont on a joué en France estoient à cinq cordes & fort grandes, leur usage estoit d'accompagner: le chevalet [bridge] estoit fort bas & placé au dessous les ouïes

¹ Hans Gerle, *Musica teusch*, Nuremberg, 1532.

² This is stated definitely on sigs. A₂ verso and A₄ verso.

³ It should be noted that these notes are given in the *Second Part* of the book in connexion with the use of the viols to accompany voices. In the *First Part* no definite pitch is given, the tuning being described by intervals with the usual instruction that the top string (of the tenor) must be tuned 'neither too high nor too low'; compare Playford, 'raise your treble or smallest string as high as conveniently it will bear without breaking'. On sig. h₂ recto, Gerle implies a different setting for the whole consort.

⁴ Hans Judenkünig, *Ain schone kunstliche vnderweisung . . .*, Vienna, 1523. To this work I have been unable to obtain access. The alleged tuning given by one 'authority' seems to me to be too doubtful to quote here.

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sound holes], le bas de la touche [finger-board] touchoit à la table, les cordes estoient fort grosses, & son accord estoit tout par Quartes.¹

To couple this to a passage by a nineteenth-century historian,² wherein we are told that

an anonymous dissertation on musical instruments belonging to the thirteenth century informs us that a certain Albinus invented a viol of four strings tuned to *a d' g' c''*

would open up for archaeological exercise an attractive by-road which must be placed, not without regret, outside the confines of this present work.

To the size of early viols we shall return; it may be noted here that the violone, or double-bass of the family, tuned an octave below the bass, had sometimes intervals of a fourth throughout and sometimes the ordinary setting.³

But the French music of this time, as also that of England, seems so completely suited to the standard tuning, that the speculation cannot be resisted of something not very unlike having been adopted. Witness those *Basse dances* published by Attaignant in 1530 and the English pieces for viols by Cornyshe, King Henry VIII, and Fardynge. Moreover, let us not lose sight of the close affinity between the viol and the lute, most emphatic in the Spanish vihuela;⁴ for no ambiguity of neighbourhood of intervals is ever found in the lute tuning.

In truth, these cradle books of instrumental music are but the openings among the dawn clouds of our sixteenth-century knowledge. It is not long before 'un vent qui vient à travers la montagne' scatters the mists and leaves us in a clarity of

Traité de la Viole (1687), p. 19. See *infra*, p. 39. Rousseau is here obviously following Mersenne almost verbatim; see also footnote, p. 18.

Hyacinth Abele.

Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum* (1618), Tom. II.

See the passage from Tinctoris quoted in Part II, *infra*, p. 108.

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guidance that is not afterwards to depart. From Venice there came in 1542 the first volume of Ganassi's complete and masterly treatise of the technique of the viols,¹ where is found a uniformity of tuning that became the universally accepted practice; nor does he for this claim any honour of invention, as the spirit of the day surely would have prompted him to do, had he thought he envisaged a new thing.

Discant: *d g c' e' a' d''*

Alto and

Tenor: *G c f a d' g'*

Bass: *D G c e a d'*

And this evidence of established usage is of particular note both as to the pitch of the whole and as to the relation of the inner voice; upon these two points there is later some little divergence of custom, but henceforth none disputes the combination of intervals. He had indeed been foreshadowed by Lanfranco a decade before,² for though the diagrams of that writer give no hint of pitch, they arrange the strings in the customary lute sequence. Lanfranco places his treble a fourth above the tenor and his bass a fifth below it, but Ganassi was far too thorough an exponent to omit such diversities of treatment and, in the fifteenth chapter of his first volume, this alternative setting of the tenor part is described and discussed. Further, in Ganassi's time for certain *musica ficta*, it was found convenient to tune down all three parts one whole tone, in either setting of the inner voice; a long and interesting account of this will be found in the eleventh and succeeding chapters of his first volume, where credit is given to

vno Gomberto maestro di capella de l'Imperatore huomo diuino in tal professione.³

¹ Silvestro Ganassi, *Regola Rubertina*, 2 vols. Venice, 1542/3.

² Giovanni Maria Lanfranco, *Scintille di Musica*, Brescia, 1533, p. 142.

³ Nicholas Gombert, one of the many Belgian musicians then in northern Italy.

THE TUNING

ut the first thing you must do, he says, is to see that the set of viols is well proportioned.

Certain slight variations of the arrangement of the parts for special purposes are given by Ganassi; no other record of these has come to the writer's notice and they need not be detailed here.¹ Of his tuning for the viols with but four, or even with only three, strings, we shall speak at a later stage.² Towards the end of the century, when information is again available, it is found that the position of the tenor part given by Lanfranco has become accepted and, as Mersenne will shortly tell us, this remained the standard Italian practice. Cerreto, writing in Naples in 1601,³ gives the following as the tuning of his day and city:

Soprano: *d g c' e' a' d''*

Alto and

Tenor: *A d g b e' a'*

Bass: *D G c e a d'*

The music of Ortiz,⁴ published in Rome half a century earlier, calls for a bass viol tuned to the pitch of Ganassi and Cerreto, but there were to appear certain at present unexplained variations. Thus Cerone,⁵ a Spaniard it is true, in writing of things Italian twelve years after Cerreto and in the same town, reverts to a setting a fifth lower throughout:

Tiple: *G c f a d' g'*

Tenor: *D G c e a d'*

Baxo: *GG C F A d g*

The curious may find the very full details in the first volume of the *Regola Albertina*, Chapters XII to XVIII. The work is available in a photographic simile, published (of course) in Germany.

See pp. 162 et seq.; also Appendix III.

Scipione Cerreto, *Della Prattica Musica*, Naples, 1601.

Diego Ortiz, *Trattado de Glosas sobre Clausulas y otros generos de puntos en la musica de Violones*. Rome, 1553. Sig. G ii (recto):

la quinta del Violon en vazio este vnisonus col el Gmaut del Cimballo.

Pedro Cerone, *El Melopeo*, Naples (1613).

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He mentions that some tune the tenor part a fifth below the treble, and a fourth above the bass. In his table of ranges he appears to place the treble one note higher, and so agrees there exactly with Zacconi's statements of 1592.¹ Yet in the purely Spanish work of Fray Thomas de Sancta Maria,² the tuning is in the familiar pitch. With the whole question of this deeper pitch a later chapter will deal.

The exhaustive treatment in the great work of Michael Praetorius³ compels a confidence that he is giving the general practice of his day in Germany, and hence it would appear that there was retained that lower pitch of Hans Gerle, the earlier lead of Agricola notwithstanding. The principal tunings of his viole da gamba are:

Cantus:	<i>A</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>e'</i>	<i>a'</i>		
Alto and								
Tenor:	<i>D</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>d'</i>		
Bass:	{	<i>AA</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>a</i>	
		or		<i>GG</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>d</i>

We may note that the tuning of the cantus corresponds exactly to the pitch given elsewhere (p. 51) by Praetorius as that of the Discant-Lute. The chanterelle or top string of the standard or 'Recht Chorist-Laute' was with him, as everywhere else, tuned a tone lower, to *g'*. On page 44 he says that the intervals of the six strings of the viole da gamba are arranged exactly as those of the 'sechs-chörich-te-Laute'; he adds that the English, for concerted music of viols, tune sometimes a fourth, and sometimes a fifth, deeper (i.e. than the lute), so that 'the top string of their small bass is in *d'*, the tenor and alto in *a'*, and the cantus in *e''*'. For concerted

¹ Lodovico Zacconi, *Prattica di Musica*, Venice, 1592.

² Fray Thomas de Sancta Maria, *Arte de Tañer Fantasia*, Valladolid, 1565.

³ Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, Tom. II, Wolfenbüttel, 1618.

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music he appears to prefer the lower pitch throughout, as even above.¹ While no other authority, English or foreign, seems ready to support his statement about our own trebles being tuned a tone *higher* than our standard, it may be remarked that Mersenne (Livre 4, Prop. IX) says that the English usually tuned their viols *down* one tone to give a more soft and charming harmony', so that the highest string of the treble was in *c*" instead of *d*". This, however, is not confirmed by our national authorities.

Mersenne,² giving only the generally accepted pitch of anassi and Cerreto for the consort, states that the Italian manner was to tune the alto and the tenor to the same notes, a fifth above the bass, that is from *A* to *a'*. Nevertheless, he says, it is more usual to place the tenor a fourth above the bass and the alto a fourth above the tenor, thus leaving only a tone between the treble and the alto. In these statements he is confirmed half a century later by Jean Rousseau.³

Germany, whatever her earlier inclinations to gravity, adapted instruments and music to the general standard as the seventeenth century advanced; for the sonatas of Kühnel for the bass viola da gamba, to cite but one instance of many,⁴ were designed for an instrument of English or French pitch. At this, after all, involved nothing more than a change of name, as the tenor of Praetorius was already so tuned.

In England the Elizabethans held entirely to what may be called the normal pitch, and no suggestion of variation occurs in the many published volumes of music of this and the succeeding period. We find the tenor tuned, as in the accepted French manner, a fourth above the bass, but it is

Praetorius, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie universelle*, Paris, 1636.

Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la Viole*, Paris, 1687.

e.g., Daniel Merk, *Compendium Musicae Instrumentalis Chelicae*, Augspurg, 1695, gives the actual notes.

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perhaps remarkable that no separate tuning for the alto is mentioned. Thus, to leap to the end of our Golden Age of music, John Playford instructs in this manner:¹

Treble:	<i>d</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>c'</i>	<i>e'</i>	<i>a'</i>	<i>d''</i>
Tenor:	<i>G</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>g'</i>
Bass:	<i>D</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>d'</i>

Nor do Maynard, Simpson, and Mace assist us further.

Of France in the later seventeenth, and in the eighteenth, centuries, it will suffice to say that it followed strictly the practice of Mersenne; this only need be noted, that in the eighteenth century a smaller instrument was devised precisely similar to the treble, but adapted throughout to permit of a tuning a fourth above it. This was known as the *Par-dessus de Viole*, the treble being, in French dress, the *Dessus de Viole*.

This bookish evidence is, in all, but one method of viewing the question; so much may be a matter of nomenclature. It is necessary to see it also in the light of both the surviving instruments and the music of the periods. By this may be postulated the use of a separate alto tuning in England, for there are many instruments with dimensions obviously suited to a slightly lower tuning than that of the contemporary trebles. Moreover, while a number of the English consorts are designed to include two tenors, many seem to demand a high alto and a tenor, wherein works by Jenkins and William Lawes may be quoted. In much of the work of the later Elizabethans, such as that of Coperario and Lupo, we find one treble, one alto, one tenor, and two basses; and here the alto part is treated as a second treble and may be tuned as such. Yet the Pavans of contemporaries like Tomkins and Ferrabosco call for an instrument tuned lower than

¹ John Playford, *A Brieve Introduction to the Skill of Musick*, 1654; and nineteen later editions.

THE TUNING

treble but near to it. In tonal character, however, the true alto tends less to the treble than to the tenor. When two basses are employed, it is usually found that during, and at the turn of, the sixteenth century the first bass is a higher part than the second bass, but in the full consort it is even when not uncommon to find two equal basses crossing; and later this becomes almost invariable.

The tunings of the early sixteenth century are not out of keeping with that deeper tone that is characteristic of the music, save that, in the consorts known to us, use is not found for the heaviest bass. The music of Hans Gerle is, by the laws of his tablature, confined to an upward limit of "assuming the seven frets of the *Musica Teusch*; with the eight frets of the lute in *Tabulatur auff die Laudten* he would gain an extra half tone to *f''*. For his tablature had not the elasticity of that of the Latin races.

For all practical purposes to-day, the business of tuning of the consort viols may be summed up thus:

Treble:	<i>d</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>c'</i>	<i>e'</i>	<i>a'</i>	<i>d''</i>
Alto:	<i>c</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>g'</i>	<i>c''</i>
Tenor:	<i>G</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>g'</i>
Bass:	<i>D</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>d'</i>

with an alternative for certain Italian and French compositions,

Treble:	<i>d</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>c'</i>	<i>e'</i>	<i>a'</i>	<i>d''</i>
Alto and Tenor:	<i>A</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>e'</i>	<i>a'</i>
Bass:	<i>D</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>d'</i>

But, within the recognized limits, the artistic demand of the music itself must ever be a final arbiter.¹

The following tuning occurs in *Porta Musices* by Samuel Marescallus, Basel, 1589:

Discant	<i>f#</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>e'</i>	<i>a'</i>	<i>d''</i>
Alt. & Ten.	<i>B</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>g'</i>
Bass	<i>E</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>c'</i>

This is quoted upon the authority of Dr. Johannes Wolf, *Notationskunde*,

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§ v.

The Violone is the double-bass of the consort viols. It is tuned an octave below the normal bass viol, but sometimes the middle interval of a major third was changed to a fourth.

Alone of the consort viols, the VIOLONE carried on, after their suppression, in daily use and survives so to-day, though parodied by a century and a half of perversion and degradation. It can here be said in anticipation that before the pure and free clarity of its profound tones, the corresponding member of the triumphant violin family, a coarse and cumbersome giant, stood helpless. The violone held its place as the ground work, as the *concerto grosso* developed into the orchestra of the late eighteenth century. But the desire for power in this register led it then to be coarsened in body and thickened in strings; gradually it shed its frets and three of its strings and so became the familiar 'double bass' of our modern orchestra, its outline still frequently betraying its lofty origin. It has already recovered one of its lost strings and in at least one orchestra to-day it may be seen with five.

The tuning of the violone of our period is, then,

	<i>DD</i>	<i>GG</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>d</i>
or	<i>CC</i>	<i>FF</i>	<i>BB</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>d</i>

This extension of the range by one tone was, however, often achieved by the simpler means of lowering the bottom string by one tone, creating the ultimate interval of a fifth;

Vol. II, p. 228. This tuning of the bass had been given by Mersenne (*Livre 4 des Insts.*, p. 191) in 1636, as one that had been in use 'before' (*devant*): the whole of this passage is rather suspect, as he is not writing of things around him, but it may be noted that the five-stringed violone of Praetorius is tuned exactly an octave deeper (*infra*, p. 19).

THE TUNING

a practice very common upon the ordinary bass viol until the addition of a seventh string disposed its necessity.¹

Of the tuning of the violone to the deeper settings of the early sixteenth century, it would be unsafe to dogmatize in the absence of direct information. Yet by analogy with the later Praetorius, we may at least suspect that it was not tuned a full octave below the bass viol of Hans Gerle. In the *Syntagma Musicum*, we read that

Die grosse *Viol de gamba* (*Italīs Violono*, oder *Contrabasso da gamba*) . . . wird von den meisten *per quartem* durch und durch gestimmt.²

yet, in his *Tabella universalis*, he gives three tunings for the violone, the lowest of which is but a sixth below his highest option for the bass viol and not all are throughout in fourths.³

<i>EE</i>	<i>AA</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>f</i>
<i>DD</i>	<i>GG</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>d</i>
<i>EE</i>	<i>AA</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>c</i>	

Praetorius also mentions a 'gar grosse Viol de Gamba' and tells of his own use of it supporting voices.⁴ He gives its tuning as

DD EE AA D G

but appears to compare its tone to the sixteen-foot register of the organ. About this instrument one, at least, must confess his ignorance.

In this use of strings for very low notes, it would seem that a stage comes when the science of sounds is divorced from that of acoustics; did not the ingenious Vuillaume construct a vast 'double bass' to give the thirty-two foot register to the orchestra, the only defect of which was that it could not be heard?

Cf. Christopher Simpson, *The Division Viol* (1667), p. 8. 'I will set your next example in *C fa ut*, with the lowest String put down a Note, as we commonly do when we play in that Key.'

Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, Tom. II, p. 44.

Ibid., p. 25. ⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 46 (misprinted '38').

THE CONSORT VIOLS

CHAPTER II

THE FORM AND THE SUBSTANCE: FRETS

The neck of all viols, from the pardessus to the violone, is fitted with gut frets placed a semitone apart.

IT is the misfortune, or perhaps the punishment, of a writer to-day that he should have to defend what was for centuries accepted without question as essential. But generations of writers on the violin, mistakenly thinking the viol to be the ancestor of their instrument, have so scoffed at frets as the device of the incompetent, that a chapter must be devoted to this most important feature. In this matter, truly, the violin itself is the heterodox condition, for what other string instrument, plucked or bowed, dispenses with frets?¹ Yet the absence of frets is as fundamental a characteristic of the violin as their presence is of the viols.

The violin at no stage of its career had frets; yet for a century it was the instrument of the uncultured, the fretted viol having a long precedence as the instrument of the educated, for concerted music. When in the race they ran neck and neck, each retained its distinctive state,² and even in the last fading of the viols they were unsullied in this matter by the universality of the violins. At the turn of the eighteenth century their true nature was not forgotten.³

¹ Compare Mersenne, *Harmonie universelle* (1636). Livre Quatriesme des Instrumens, Prop. I, p. 177.

² See, for example, the defence of the frets on the viol in Hubert le Blanc, *Défense de la Basse de Viole*, Amsterdam (1740), pp. 133-5.

³ J. J. Klein, *Lehrbuch der theoretischen Musik*, Leipzig, 1801, p. 218.

Die Violdigambe ist das erste und kleinste von den Geigeninstrumenten, welche in senkrechter Richtung bey dem Spielen angewendet werden, und wird daher mit den Knien gehalten. Sie hat sechs Saiten, welche in *D G c e a d'* gestimmt und ihre Griffe durch Bünde auf dem Griffbrete bemerkt werden, deren sieben sind und nach halben Tönen gehen. Sie hat einen

THE GUT FRETS

Musically, the purpose of the frets is twofold: they give to each note played the clear ringing quality of the open string, so characteristic of the instrument; and they provide for an equal-tempered scale. That the latter feature opens up an abyss of speculation upon the playing of concerted music, the writer is well aware; for it is said that no two players upon an instrument of unfixed tuning, like the violin, play in the same scale, save with long companionship, and that nationality must here play a strong hand. Yet this question, at least in part, was no new one in the sixteenth century; and that the fretted viol, like the lute, gave a practical scale of equal intervals throughout was observed by many who distinguished the elasticity of the violin.¹ The purist in solo playing is not hindered by the frets from obtaining his perfect consonances, for by pulling or pushing upon the strings the necessary sharpening or flattening can be achieved; the generality of such methods is defined in contemporary books.² The frets are no impediment to the comfort of performance in the most rapid and brilliant 'divisions'; and for those pieces involving the holding of two or more real parts, the frets are an essential condition. Far from diminishing ornaments, they allow of all and permit of several not to be played upon an unfretted neck; nor is the portamento obstructed, though, to its honour, the music of the period calls for it seldom.³

angenehmen und schneidenden Ton, und ist von einem zarten und feinen Bau. Sie Kann zum Solo und Concert sowohl, als zur Begleitung gebraucht werden, da man zumal der mehrern Saiten wegen artige Harmonien darauf vortragen kann. Dieses sehr delicate Instrument ist aber ziemlich aus der Mode gekommen. . . .
¹ See, for example, the elaborate discussions upon these matters of Hercule Bottrigaro, *Il Desiderio*, Venice (1599); and Mersenne (1636) upon the violin. Also, Lusitano Vincentio, *Introdottione facilissima* . . . Venice (1558), fol. 26 verso.

² Bottrigaro, *opus cit.*, p. 5.
³ For details of ornaments, the third Part of Rousseau's *Traité de la Viole* (1687) should be consulted. His remarks upon the injudicious use of vibrato and portamento (Chap. XI) are excellent.

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Throughout the sixteenth century the presence of frets formed an essential feature of the classification of instruments by writers of the day. Virdung separates stringed instruments into four classes: the first has fixed tuning of its strings, which are played with keys, illustrated by virginals and clavichord. Next come those with no keys, on which the notes are fixed by means of frets, the three instruments depicted being a large and a small lute, and a viol. The third class has fixed tuning for all notes but no keys, as the harp and psaltery; while

Die fiert art der saiten spill / die habē nit bünde / auch nur
eynen oder zwen kore / oder drey uff das maiste / und nit dar
über / . . .

and such are the small fiddles (rebecs) and the trumscheit or tromba marina.¹

Agricola distinguishes the small fiddles and trumscheit in a precisely similar manner in the first edition of his book and refers, throughout this and the later editions, to the rebecs as 'Kleine Geigen one [ohne] bünde' or 'onebündischen Geigen' while giving elaborate directions for the fixing of the frets upon his viols.²

Hans Gerle, having dealt with duly fretted viols, arrives at the next part of his book upon the rebecs with the title

Hie hebt an der Drittaul diss Buchs und lernt wie du solt auff
den kleynen Geigleyn lernen die kein Bündt haben.³

Lanfranco,⁴ too, had headed his sections on the rebecs (or ? early violins) and the viols respectively

¹ Sebastian Virdung, *Musica Getutscht*, Basle, 1511. Sig. B i (recto and verso) and sig. B ii (recto).

² Martin Agricola, *Musica instrumentalis deudsch*, 1528/9, fol. lv (verso); and 1545, fols. 40 (recto), 48 (recto), and 49 (recto).

³ Hans Gerle, *Musica Teusch*, 1532, sig. H₂ (verso).

⁴ Giovanni Maria Lanfranco, *Scintille di Musica*, 1533, pp. 137, 142.

THE GUT FRETS

Della Violetta da Arco senza tasti.

Del Violoni da tasti: & da Arco.

These are but preludes, in all four writers, to important passages which will play their part later in this book. The numerous references to the frets in the course of practical instruction by succeeding writers need not be particularized here; they are ubiquitous in time and place. The already quoted work of Bottrigarò should alone convince that it was not the musically illiterate who called for frets. To hear yet another tongue, two chapter headings from Cerone may speak on this same distinction:

Cap. XVIII. Del modo de templar la Vihuela de braço, y sin trastes.

Cap. XIX. Del modo de templar el Violon ò la Vihuela de arco, que es la que tiene los trastes.¹

Mersenne, powerful advocate of the advantages of the fret-free neck of the violins, clearly states this fundamental distinction to the viols in a passage which cannot be separated from a long (and, to the present purpose, irrelevant) context.²

Germany also bears witness in the late seventeenth century, for Daniel Merk,³ writing his little brochure principally about the violin family, mentions the viola da gamba and its distinctive frets.

English writers like Mace and Simpson, speaking in a time when they were painfully conscious of the stabilized violin, treat of the frets on viols with an unconscious certainty of their inevitability more persuading than any protestations.

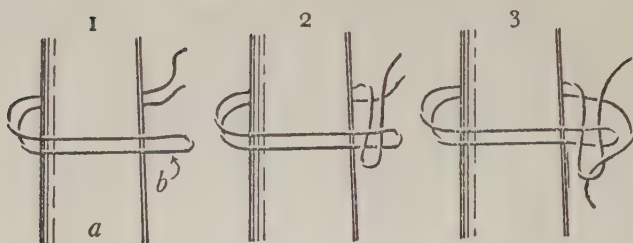
¹ Pedro Cerone, *El Melopeo*, 1613, pp. 1057 et seq.

² Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie universelle*, 1636, Livre Quatriesme des Instrumens (Proposition VIII), p. 195. See also many passages in Props. I, II, III, and IV of this Section.

³ Daniel Merk, *Compendium Musicae Instrumentalis Chelicae*, 1695. See sig. C₃ verso.

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THE FRET KNOT



a The neck, seen from the back.

b A gut string, doubled and passed around the neck.

See also John Playford,¹ as familiar and more readily to be obtained; he is of special interest since here the earliest English tutor for the violin sits cheek by jowl with a tutor for the viols. Of the bass viol he says,

Belonging to these *six Strings* there are *seven Frets* or *Stops* on the *Neck* of the *Viol*, which are put there for stopping the various sounds.

and his teaching for tablature, tuning, and ornaments is conceived throughout in terms of frets. Yet he will not allow the violin to be fretted, except for the sake of the novice's ear.

This line need not be pursued to boredom. Sufficient now to say that every possible evidence of books takes frets for granted; every artistic record in paint, pencil, or engraved line for three centuries shows viols fretted; and instruments have survived from the past with the frets still in place.

¹ John Playford, *A Brief Introduction to the Skill of Musick*, 1st edition, 1654; but see any edition between 1660 and 1722.

THE GUT FRETS

A viol without frets would be as untrue to its distant ancestors as to itself.

As in the lute, each fret consisted of a gut string passing twice over the finger-board and tied with a special knot that allowed it to be tightened after stretching. Upon this, our next volume will speak in more detail, but the diagram set here will explain the operation.

The frets have an intimate connexion with the business of tablature,¹ into which an excursion cannot be taken until tablature is described. Here it can be said that tablature is suited to the frets, which are ancient and not, as some have suggested, the frets to tablature,² which is a device of the late fifteenth century.

¹ But frets are not essential to tablature, for violin music was sometimes written in tablature in the seventeenth century; cf. also Hans Gerle's music for the rebec.

² A full description of instrumental tablature notation will be given in a later volume. An epitome is given in Appendix IV.

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CHAPTER III

THE FORM AND THE SUBSTANCE STRINGS AND WOOD

§ i.

SO far, the itinerary of the qualities absolute of the viol has been faithfully followed; in the number of strings, the tuning, and the frets. In strict precedence should come now the manner of bowing and by consequence the manner of holding; but before taking it privilege may be asked to dispose of those attributes which were defined with relation to the family of the violins.

§ ii.

The strings of a viol are longer, lighter, and less tense than those of a violin.

Marin Mersenne contrasts with the viol instruments of all sorts, to their little glory; and, for the effects of which he is speaking, the violin fares no better. 'As for the violin, it may be called an imitator of the viol as it is of the voice'; but it does not equal it

car le Violon a trop de rudesse, d'autant que l'on est contraint de le monter de trop grosses chordes pour esclater dans les suiets, ausquels il est naturellement propre.¹

Observe here how well Mersenne appreciates the polity of adaptation of an instrument to its own music; one of the first to give strong support to the advancing violins, he nevertheless realized their proper environment.

In the eighteenth century in France the viols still had a

¹ *Harmonie universelle*, 1636. Livre Quatriesme des Instrumens, p. 195.

STRINGS AND WOOD

powerful school of defenders; one of the most earnest of these has imagined a set debate between the violin and its elder rival, in the course of which there are numerous references to the thicker, shorter, and more tense strings of the former. Perhaps the most illustrative moment is when the bass viol tells the violoncello that its strings are 'vrais cables de Navire'.¹

Further authorities might be quoted in support of this case but would be redundant. More than one viol has been found, left by some departed user of a bygone age, with strings and frets still attached, which places the matter beyond indefinite proportion sums.²

The viol string's weight may be viewed from a different angle. To attain the requisite standpoint for this it is necessary in a measure to forecast the next section of this chapter and to accept the fact of the lightness of the viol's woody structure as relative to that of the violins; a lightness that extends, not only to back, belly, and ribs, but also in a marked measure to the bass bar and the form of the neck. Consider, as most readily comparable, the bass viol and the violoncello. In a full-sized consort bass, the sounding length of the strings, the distance bounded by bridge and nut, is an inch or more longer than the corresponding length in a modern violoncello; yet the highest string of the former must be tuned to *d'*, a fourth higher than the top string of the latter. Picture the tension required to pull anything like a violoncello top string to this pitch! Even granting the violoncello's strength of body and neck, a thinner string would have to be used, for the sake of both gut and tone; much lighter must it therefore be, on a greater length, for the delicate structure of the bass viol,

Hubert le Blanc, *Défense de la Basse de Viole* . . ., Amsterdam, 1740, p. 89. See also pp. 32 and 107.

A particularly interesting example came to the writer's notice in 1926: a bass viol was found in France in a house where it had lain apparently undisturbed for perhaps two hundred years, with its strings and frets still present.

THE CONSORT VIOLS

whose body, too, is smaller. So also with the other strings in like manner.

There is yet another factor. The string of the viol must speak with perfect freedom at the slightest touch of the bow and for this the heavy tense string offers too great an inertia; the need for less tension demands a lighter string. And this comparison holds true for the smaller members of the respective families. This is of particular interest as explaining much of the evil that befell the *viole da gamba*, large and small, in the dark days of inconsiderate efforts at revival. Those who played them were invariably violinists or violoncellists, and they bowed accordingly; even had they visualized a light and less tense string, they could not have understood how these could have been played without yielding a buzzing, and sinking under their handling. Therefore, the instruments were strung to suit the only type of bows and of bowing they knew; and, of necessity, the unfortunate bodies had to be shored up within to withstand these demands for power.

The results of experiments upon virginal specimens played with true technique and bow, guided by the contemporary evidence both direct and indirect of tone colour, led to a gauge for the strings that has been in every way confirmed by those survivals that have so happily removed the question from debate. A general guide to the correct size of the strings may be taken from the top string of a consort bass viol, which is about midway between the normal E and A strings of a violin. The top string of the treble viol does not become reduced in the proportion seen between the string of a violoncello and a violin, or it might bid fair to vanish altogether; sounding an octave above the bass and being therefore half the length, it is a little thinner than a gut E string of a violin.

The two lower strings on the bass viol are gimped.

STRINGS AND WOOD

§ iii.

That the wood of the viols is thin needs no demonstration beyond a reference to the many specimens surviving in their original state.

The greater depth of the ribs of the alto and treble viols is also a matter requiring no proof other than the testimony of the instruments. But the proportions have not an unchanging constancy; there is some variation both among examples of any one period and, in a more general way, between periods. Thus, to speak in a very broad sense, the tendency of the sixteenth century is towards a greater depth of ribs in its altos and trebles than that of the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But even in this later period the depth usually exceeds, by a marked amount, that of violins and 'violas'.¹ Here, for exact details, reference should be made to the tables of measurements.

Before passing from this matter a warning must be given of the fate of many viols and the state in which they may be found. As the fashion for their music passed, economy found a use for them by conversion into 'violas' or violoncellos. The process of translation of the smaller types included, amongst other details, the removal of the old neck and its replacement by one of the violin pattern, the insertion of a longer and stouter bass bar, and the cutting down of the ribs to the normal 'viola' depth. Occasionally, the whole of the ribs was not altered, and sufficient accommodation was found by cutting away a sloping section at the end. Now although the depth of ribs might vary between instruments and periods, the proportions of each individual instrument were carefully conceived to preserve what may be termed, in mathematical

¹ The colloquial English word 'viola' for an alto violin is apt to be misleading and is therefore placed in inverted commas.

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language, a constant 'function', in terms of tone colour. Hence it comes that the restoration of a converted viol to its original purpose is a matter not lightly to be entered upon; for there is demanded of the craftsman, not only a full knowledge of the construction of viols, but also a long experience of the tonal effects of varying types and proportions.

That it is not impossible to find the exception demanded of the proverb is shown by at least one bass viol known to the writer. Although this instrument is of more than usual thickness of wood, a strangeness of shape and proportion seems to have been devised to preserve for it a great beauty of tone. Also, late French treble viols do occasionally tend to narrow ribs, but these are strangers to the generality of even this period.

CHAPTER IV

THE METHOD OF HOLDING THE VIOLS

In playing the consort viols, each member of the family is held and bowed in the same manner. All members of the family of the consort viols are held downwards.

THE reader familiar with the practice of playing viol fantasies will hardly understand the reason for a demonstration of this proposition. To him it will be so inconceivable that the music could be played in any other way that the matter will appear as needless of proof as one of Euclid's axioms. Unfortunately, all readers will not be fantasy players. For many, the long reign of the violins, after the deposition of the viols, has created a pervading preconception: 'small bowed instruments are held over the arm; the treble viol is a small bowed instrument; therefore the treble viol is held over the arm'. At a risk of prolixity, it is necessary

THE METHOD OF HOLDING

to scatter the undistributed middle of this illogical attempt at a syllogism.

Silvestro Ganassi in 1542 published the first part of his treatise for the playing of concerted music upon the viols. He acknowledges three voices, as a previous chapter has shown, and the pitch of his treble was that almost universally adopted by the end of the century. The instructions for holding the instruments and for the movements of the hands are of the most elaborate description, and he has the true artist's horror of laxity of treatment or distortion of posture. In these early chapters the tuition is in general terms, no special size of instrument being specified, and it is, fortunately for our purpose, impossible for the most agile controversialist to find any other meaning in his teaching. But, to make things perfectly clear, he provided his title-page with so considerable an engraving of a consort that the title itself has become reduced to two small lines. In this engraving, the descant, tenor, and bass are being played, all in precisely the same manner, and this manner is a faithful rendering of his tuition.

Modo di praticar l'archetto. Cap. IIII.

Sappi che l'archetto si debbe tenerlo con tre dediti ch' è il pollice cioè il grosso e lo indice & il medio, il pollice con il medio applica in tenerlo, che non caschi e lo indice serve in fortificar per fermar e con mantenerse su le corde con calcar più e manco secondo il bisogno, dappoi in pratica si ha uera di tirarlo quattro dita da largo del scagnello e più e manco secondo la grandezza, piccolezza de l'istromento . . .¹

It is necessary to break off somewhat in mid-air, for Ganassi is almost as innocent of full-stops as he is of grammatical constructions; nor need a translation be made, for, leaping a century, we shall find an Englishman giving precisely the same directions:

¹ *Regola Rubertina*, Vol. I, 1542, sig. A₄ recto.

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§ 5. *How to hold and move the Bow.*

Hold the Bow betwixt the ends of your Thumb and two foremost fingers, near to the Nut. The Thumb and first finger fastned on the Stalk; and the second fingers end turned *in* shorter, against the Hairs thereof; by which you may poize and keep up the point of the Bow. If the second finger have not strength enough, you may joyn the third finger in assistance to it; but in Playing Swift Division,¹ two fingers and the Thumb is best.²

True that Simpson is here speaking of the bass viol, but later in the book he describes the use of the treble viol in combined divisions and gives no hint of a different usage.³ But there is no need to follow Polonius, by indirections seeking directions out; even later, writers speak with a clarity that calls for no exegesis. Jean Rousseau's treatise on the consort viols belongs to a period when the violins had established themselves firmly into the musical system of France, only to witness the maturity of the French school of composers for the viols. France, indeed, is unique in this respect, that the advent of the violins seems not to have affected at all the popularity of the viols. Rousseau treats of all the viols and his directions for holding the bow follow the usual terms to be seen in Ganassi, Simpson, and Mace. At a later stage of the book he has a chapter devoted to the Treble, or *Dessus de Viole*, in which the following is the direction for holding it:

¹ Misprinted 'Divivision'. ² Christopher Simpson, *Division Viol* (1667), p. 2.

³ The evidence of Playford in his *Introduction to the Skill of Musick* (for example edn. of 1674) is even more marked, for he describes and gives instructions for tuning the 'three several sizes of the *Viol de Gambo*', and although his directions for bowing and fingering are applied to the bass viol he hints at no sort of difference between this and the smaller voices, as he assuredly would have done if one so radical had existed. And this is emphasized by the fact that the tutor for the Treble Violin follows immediately. In a like manner to Simpson, Mace instructs for the bass viol, but mentions several details about the treble viol and tacitly implies that all sizes of viols were treated in the same way.

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La maniere de le tenir est entre les deux genoux.¹

And for bowing it:

Le coup d'Archet au Jeu du Dessus de Viole, doit estre réglé comme celuy de la Basse.

Nor was this any fancy of his day, for many generations later we find that the smallest viol of all, the *pardessus de viole*, was still played on the knees; thus Boisgelou, in his *Catalogue*, writes:

Les vieux Partisans de l'Ancienne musique, tentèrent un dernier effort et voulurent perpétuer leur goût en inspirant à leurs enfants et surtout aux jeunes demoiselles, de préférer, par décence, le pardessus de viole aux autres instrumens comme s'il était moins honneste (dit un observateur plaisant) de mettre un violon sur l'épaule qu'un pardessus entre les jambes.²

Fifty years before Rousseau, in a passage which is concerned with the tunings of all voices in the consort of viols, Mersenne had said:

Je veux encore adiouster ce qui appartient aux traits d'archet, qui vont tout au cōtraire de ceux des Violons . . .³

But why should it be necessary at all to explain that the

Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la Viole*, 1687. Seconde Partie, Chap. VI, pp. 72 and 73.

See Appendix I for details of this reference.

Was this, one wonders, a dictate of modesty or of costume? Compare Mace, Part III, Chap. I: 'I remember there was a *Fashion*, not many Years since, for *Women in their Apparel* to be so *Pent up by the Straitness, and Stiffness* of their *Town-Shoulder-Sleeves*, that *They* could not so much as *Scratch Their Heads*, for the *Necessary Remove of a Biting Louse*; nor *Elevate their Arms scarcely to feed themselves Handsomly*; nor *Carve a Dish of Meat at a Table*, but their *whole Body* must needs *Bend towards the Dish*.'

We may also quote an acute student of more recent times:

Pardessus de viole, qui se tenait appuyé sur le genou et que les dames cultivèrent avec succès. (E. Thoinan, in his monograph on André Maugars, Paris, 1865, p. 16.)

Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie universelle*, 1636. Livre Quatriesme des Instrumens, Prop. IX (p. 204).

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smaller viols were held downwards when the name *Viola da Gamba* means 'Viols of the legs'? Thus, when Cerreto gives the tuning of the viols, he speaks of the '*accordo di tutte le quattro Parti delle Viole Da Gamba*', and in giving the translation of tablature for the range of each instrument he says 'heads that for the treble viol

Notule intauolate nel Soprano della Viola da Gamba.¹

Praetorius clearly separates the viols from the violins by the method of holding:

Violen, Geigen, Violuntzen.
Seynd zweyerley.

1. *Viola de gamba*: 2. *Viola de braccio*, oder *de braccio*: Und haben den Namen daher, dass die ersten zwischen den beyden Beinen gehalten werden: Denn *gamba* ist ein italienisch Wort, und heisset ein Bein, *le gambe*, die Beinen. Und dieweil diese viel grössere *corpora*, und wegen des Kragens lenger, die Saiten auch ein lenger Zug haben, so geben sie weit ein lieblicher Resonanz als die andern *de braccio*, welche uff dem Arm gehalten werden.²

Now it is quite obvious that not even Dramuziando would have been expected to play the bass *viola da braccia*, or violoncello, upon his arm or under his chin, so that the distinction in name must have been applied to the smaller

¹ Scipione Cerreto, *Della Prattica Musica*, Naples, 1601, Libro Quarto, Ch. XI, pp. 331 and 334.

² Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, 1618, Tom. II, Cap. XX, p. 44. One would have thought that this was clear enough for anybody; yet we find Burney, in his savage hatred of Tudor and Stuart instrumental music, labelling his tuning of the tenor viol 'Tenor-viol, or viol da Braccio' and thus misleading students for a century and a half (Vol. III, p. 357.) Without the slightest distinction, he sums up *the whole* of the English compositions for the viols with expressions like 'despicable', 'contemptible', and 'very rude' (Vol. III, pp. 356 and 358).

Now that we are becoming more enlightened, I hope that the reputation of the prejudiced and log-rolling Burney will find its true level, to the advantage of the honest, if occasionally mistaken, Hawkins.

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struments with which alone distinctive positions were possible.¹

Many more passages² could be brought to witness, but there is happily no longer occasion for protesting too much; the practical work of recent years has brought home, to even the most hardened cases, the fact that the viol and violin are distinct families with widely divergent technical requirements. It may be as well, however, to mention one common source of error in those to whom a little learning has proved dangerous. The *lyra da braccia* is so often shown in the art of a time before the violin had its being, that lack of appreciation of its highly individual nature has led some people to assume that, as it was not a violin, it must have been a treble viol.

This chapter may be closed with a reference to pictorial evidence. An Elizabethan painting in our National Portrait Gallery shows scenes in the life of Sir Henry Unton (or Umpton); here will be seen a full consort of viols in progress and Sir Henry is playing the tenor. Another is a Dutch painting of rather later date and shows, in a domestic musical gathering, a lady playing the treble viol.³

It is remarkable that the immense popularity of the viols for over two centuries should have inspired practically no painting, engraving, or drawing of a consort. And the

There was one famous player who could have used a double-bass violin under his chin with ease; for we learn that, at the academy of Ponocrates, Argantua was taught many musical instruments, including the viols (*The First Book*, chap. xxiii).

Amongst others may be mentioned two of the most positive: Pedro Cerone, *El Melopeo* (1613), Lib. XXI, Cap. VII, p. 1043; Lodovico Zacconi, *Prattica Musica*, 1592, Lib. IV, Cap. LIII (misprinted LVII) and Cap. LVI, folios 17 (recto) and 218 (recto).

It is also noteworthy that Agricola, in the middle of the sixteenth century, distinguishes the rebecs from the 'grossen geigen' (viols), by calling the former 'andgeigen'; see fol. 50 (verso) of the edition of 1545.

This picture is *Musikalische Unterhaltung* by Jacob A. Duck, No. 231 in the Dresden Gallery. A photograph is in the Hanfstaengl collection.

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smaller viols are seldom found depicted, in spite of their use as solo instruments late into the eighteenth century; while rebecs, early violins and lyras are shown in countless numbers in the paintings of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

CHAPTER V

A CHEST OF VIOLS

ALTHOUGH but three or, in places, four different pitches for the tuning of the voices of the consort viols are laid down, the sizes of the viols were delicately adjusted to give each of the equally important and independent parts in the concerted music, its personal tone colour.¹ So that, taking a complete range, viols were constructed to the following order:

1. The high descant or *Pardessus de Viole*.
2. The Treble.
3. The Alto.
4. The small Tenor or *Haute contre*.
5. The true Tenor.
6. The small Bass.
7. The full consort Bass.

The Violone, being seldom called for in the pure consort, is omitted from this catalogue; and to be meticulously accurate, the 'small bass' should be subdivided, for the Lyra Viol² was sometimes pressed into service with the other viols and it is distinctly higher in tone colour than the small true bass viol, usually known as the division viol, though more comparable to it than to the tenor. For the most perfect performance of concerted music for viols, each part should

¹ See, upon this subject, Rousseau, *opus cit.*, p. 21; and Mersenne, *opus cit.* upon the viols.

² This 'Lyra Viol' must not be confused with the Lyra da braccia.

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have the size of instrument dictated by the range of the music; an ideal to which, in our present dependence upon surviving instruments, we have too often to look more in hope than in achievement.

The full consort bass has a length from nut to bridge of about 28 inches,¹ hence the true tenor, being tuned a fourth above the bass, should have a corresponding length of 21 inches; and, as the treble is an octave above the bass, it will require a sounding string of just half the length, or 14 inches. The alto, being one tone below the treble, should have a length between bridge and nut of about $15\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and the smaller tenor, corresponding to the tuning of a fifth above the bass, will have this length about 19 inches. The size of the division viol, which is tuned to the same pitch as the consort bass, is more empirical, but the length of its vibrating string is from 15 to 26 inches. Of the Lyra viol, the tuning of which was variable for solo work, all that need be said is that sizes vary within a fairly well-defined range which gives lengths from nut to bridge of from 23 inches to nearly 25 inches. The *ardessus de viole* has a sounding string about 11 inches long; it is a late instrument and is outside the consort proper, but, nevertheless, a true viol.

As a relief from necessary, but uninspiring, arithmetic, a more human account of the stocking of a complete chest of viols may be read. But what has already been said upon the existence of the independent alto in England should not be absent from the mind.

Your *Best Provision*, (and *most Compleat*) will be, a *Good Chest of*

Readers of Simpson's *Division Viol* will recall that in that work the length from nut to bridge is stated to be thirty inches and that this is less than the corresponding length of a consort bass. No consort basses with this dimension measuring even thirty inches are known, the largest being not much over twenty-eight inches. Other measurements given by Simpson (e.g. of the bow) show that he was using a unit much smaller than our standard of to-day. On this point compare the illustrations in the *Sciagraphia* of Praetorius.

THE CONSORT VIOLS

Viols; Six, in Number; viz. 2 Basses, 2 Tenors and 2 Trebles: All Truly, and Proportionably Suited.

Of such, there are no *Better in the World*, than *Those of Aldre Jay, Smith*,¹ (yet the *Highest in Esteem* are) *Bolles and Ross*, (on the *Bass of Bolles's*, I have known *Valued at 100l.*) *These were Old* but We have *Now*, very *Excellent Good Workmen*, who (no doubt) can *Work* as well as *Those*, if They be so well *Paid for Their Work* as *They* were; yet we chiefly *Value Old Instruments*, before *New*; for by *Experience*, they are found to be far the *Best*.

The *Reasons* for which, I can no further *Dive* into, than to say I apprehend, that by *Extream Age*, the *Wood*, (and *Those Other Adjuncts*) *Glew, Parchment, Paper, Lynings of Cloath*, (as some use) but above *All*, the *Vernish*; *These are All*, so very much (by *Time* *Dried, Lenefied, made Gentle, Rarified*, or (to say *Better*, even *Ayrified*; so that *That Stiffness, Stubbornness, or Clunguiness*, which is *Natural to such Bodies*, are so *Debilitated*, and made *Plyable*, that the *Pores of the Wood*, have a *more, and Free Liberty to Move, Stretch, or Secretly Vibrate*; by which means the *Air* (which is the *Life of All Things*) both *Animate and Inanimate*) has a *more Free, and Easier Recourse*, to *Pass and Re-pass*, &c. whether I have hit upon the *Right Cause*, I know not; but sure I am, that *Age Adds Goodness to Instruments*; therefore They have the *Advantage* of all our *Leather Work-men*.

Now, suppose you cannot procure an *Intire Chest of Viols* *Suitable*, &c. Then, *Thus*.

Endeavour to *Pick up* (*Here, or There*) so many *Excellent Good Odd Ones*, as *near Suiting* as you can, (every way) *viz. both for Shape, Wood, Colour, &c.* but especially for *Scize*.

And to be *Exact in That*, take *This Certain Rule*, *viz.* Let you

¹ In *Tripla concordia*, published by John Carr (1667), there is a notice of a chest of viols

made by Mr. Henry Smith who formerly lived
over against Hatton house in Holbourn
containing 2 trebles, 2 tenors, 2 basses,
the chest was made in the year 1633.

I cannot find any trace of a copy of this work and the passage is quoted on the authority of Lütgendorff (Vol. II, p. 471), who is also my sole authority for the date of the book.

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Bass be *Large*. Then your *Trebles* must be just as *Short* again, in the *String*, (viz.) from the *Bridge*, to *Nut*, as are your *Basses*; because they stand 8 *Notes Higher* than the *Basses*; Therefore, as *Short* again; (for the *Middle* of *Every String*, is an 8th. The *Tenors*, (in the *String*) just so long as from the *Bridge*, to *F Fret*; because they stand a 4th *Higher*, than your *Basses*; Therefore, so *Long*.

Let *This Suffice*, to put you into a *Compleat Order* for *Viols*, (either way;) Only *Note*, That the *Best Place* for the *Bridge*, is to stand just in the 3 *Quarter Dividing* of the *Open Cuts Below*; though *Most*, most *Erroniously* suffer them much to stand too *High*, which is a *Fault*.

And now to make your *Store* more *AmPLY-Compleat*; add to all *These 3 Full-Sciz'd Lyro-Viols*; there being most *Admirable Things* made, by our *Very Best Masters*, for *That Sort of Musick*, both *Consort-wise*, and *Peculiarly* for 2 and 3 *Lyroes*.

Let *Them* be *Lusty, Smart-Speaking Viols*; because, that in *Consort*, they often *Retort* against the *Treble*; *Imitating*, and often *Standing instead of That Part*, viz. a *Second Treble*.

They will serve likewise for *Division-Viols* very *Properly*.

And being *Thus Stor'd*, you have a *Ready Entertainment* for the *Greatest Prince* in the *World*.¹

A passage from Rousseau has been quoted in Chapter I about the large size of the early viols in France, and similar references are found in Mersenne.² It is well to remind oneself when reading such books that unsupported statements, by even these writers, about things that happened before their own time, are no more to be relied upon than the analogous 'facts' of much later musical historians. All the talk about 'early' viols having been giants is entirely the opposite of what can be gathered from the evidence bequeathed by the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries; for we should say,

Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument*, 1676, Part III, Chap. IV, pp. 245, 246. See *supra*, p. 10. Rousseau repeats the apocryphal story given by Mersenne about a page being enclosed inside a large viol, to sing the treble, while the player sang the tenor and played the bass.

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rather, that it was the late fifteenth century that saw the beginnings in an increase of the size of instruments. This surely, appears in the word violone, or 'large viol', for this was applied originally to any and all of the consort viols, and may be seen in such familiar instances as Lanfranco, Ganas, Diego Ortiz, and even later writers.¹ It was only after the sixteenth century had closed that it became the distinctive name of the largest of all, the double-bass viol.

But when we read in Rousseau that

Il est vray que les Anglois ont reduit leurs Violes à une grandeur commode, devant les François, comme il est facile d'en juger par les Anciennes Violes d'Angleterre, dont nous faisons une estimation particuliere en France.²

there must be seen only a reference to a slight reduction in the size of the higher voices which there is justification for saying took place about the turn of the sixteenth century. Yet it must not be forgotten that Ganassi had his trebles with their top strings tuned to *d*" and that therefore his instruments must have been comparable to those of England.

There is, however, a serious problem about the sixteenth century viols over which a cloud of mystery still hangs. An explanation, and probably a simple one, must exist, but the present writer must confess that to him it has shown a complete obduracy. It will have been seen in Chapter I that several authorities give a tuning for the set of viols that is a fourth or even a fifth lower than the accepted pitch. And the authorities are often close together in time and place, for example compare Agricola in 1528 with Hans Gerle in 1532; Ganas in 1542 and Cerreto in 1601 with Zacconi in 1592, Cerone in 1613 and Praetorius in 1618; observe, too, that Ganassi

¹ Compare the use of the expressions 'gross geige' and 'kleine geige' to distinguish between viols and rebecs, by the early German writers such as Viridun Agricola, and Gerle.

² Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la Viole* (1687), p. 22.

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in the same town, Venice, as Zacconi; Cerreto in the same town, Naples, as Cerone. By no jugglery can these respective families be made anything but true consort *viola da gamba*, and most of the writers emphasize strongly the isolation of this family from the other bowed instruments,¹ so that we cannot escape from our difficulty by saying that in the low-pitched sets the true treble part was taken by, for example, a *viola da braccia*—even if that idea were not absurd on other grounds.

Yet this is one of those cases which we meet in all walks of life, where the dictates of common sense must override a mass of apparently unimpeachable evidence: viol consorts cannot be transposed down a fourth or a fifth; the thing simply will not work and, pragmatically, there is an end of it. Moreover, although some of the earlier consorts have a restricted upward range, no consort has ever been found descending to the depths of these very low notes; nor have any instruments survived from which a set, complete in itself and tunable to this pitch, could be made up. One obstacle to a too ready dismissal of the point is that in several of the books in which the low pitch is found, other instruments, such as the violin, seem to be in their normal zone. On the other hand, the absence of the slightest hint of a variety in such an important matter by careful writers like Zacconi, Cerreto, and Cerone would be astonishing, had such existed; only in Praetorius do we find a rather enigmatic reference when he speaks of the English custom of tuning.²

On the negative side, then, we have, first the fundamental objection that viol consorts are musically out of the question for this pitch; secondly, that the parts do not correspond to

Zacconi and Cerone are particularly interesting upon this point, but the passages are too long to be quoted here. See footnote on page 35 for the references.

Syntagma Musicum, Vol. II (1618), Cap. XX, p. 44.

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the human voice, by which the sixteenth century was wont to cast its instrumental ranges; thirdly, there are neither compositions nor instruments for this pitch; fourthly, in the places and periods where the difference appears most obvious there is no suggestion, in the authors responsible for our data, of any such difference. In this the writer finds only partial comfort for a mind that craves precision and Euclidian proof, but here he is compelled to leave it.

There is one item of evidence that may have a bearing on the problem: in Caccini's *Le Nuove Musiche* (1602)¹ there is a bass song, full of florid ornaments and rapid passages, which is scored at least a fourth, and more probably a fifth, below the effective range of a bass singer. While the vocalist is not asked to rise above middle *c*, he is expected to execute semi-quavers and trills at the bottom of the keyboard. Obviously it is not intended to be sung as written. This is not an isolated example and the practice can be found in books of songs as late as the middle of the eighteenth century.²

CHAPTER VI

TYPES OF VIOLS; AND THEIR FEATURES

§ i.

THESE chapters upon the Form and Substance of the viols would not be complete without some reference to features of outward shape, though the interest of these is perhaps more artistic than truly musical. If it is wrong, on this account may show, to try to define a viol by its exterior

¹ (The colophon bears the date 1607.) See p. 46, *Dhe se tue belle ciglia*; another example occurs on p. 27. Compare the two bass songs in the edition of 1611 on pages 35 and 37. See Appendix III, *infra* p. 243.

² I have a volume of Scottish songs with guitar accompaniment published by Bremner about 1760 in which the voice is written up to notes in the octave starting on *c*³, presaging a bat-like twittering that would have astonished Ilm di Mursca herself.

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form, far more is it wrong to attempt an evolutionary history of the violin by correlation of such appearances. For the viol is, in truth, a very Proteus among instruments; and yet, explain it how you will, tonally it remains the same throughout. But the violin has had its form fixed and, despite the experiments of some makers to revert to an early prototype for outline, it is not likely to vary outside the narrowest of limits; for the seal of three centuries and more is set upon it by the unanimity of craftsmen and such a decision is not lightly to be set aside.

The historian is defeated in an attempt to produce a compact diagram of chronological changes in the viols by the irrepressible tendency of the sixteenth-century makers to produce exceptions to any apparent regularity. Nevertheless, in a very guarded way, and with a warning to the reader that departures can possibly be more readily found than examples, it may be said that the shape of the viols falls into three main periods. Each of these periods melts into its neighbour and there are gulfs of international disagreement to bear in mind. In the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, the prevailing fashion seems rather to have been against corners¹ and toward a flowing guitar-like outline. Following this, there came a time, perhaps not very lengthy, of fascination by corners and curls, which survived for a few decades in other instruments. And then with occasional atavistic moments, the familiar 'standard' model of the seventeenth century begins to appear. In this last stage the bass viol not infrequently adopts the outline, but not the structure, of the violoncello; and if this was done, as we shall see later, for a definite purpose, such a shape had not been without foreshadowing in the viols of a century before. In the evening of the eighteenth century in France, trebles, degenerate perhaps, but viols

¹ Corners were, of course, in use before the end of the fifteenth century; but the viols seem, on balance, to have taken to corners with reluctance.

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none the less, are found approximating to the violin in shape.

Before discussing this very tentative suggestion of stratification, it will save elaborate explanations if something is said about the typical specimens that have been selected for illustration. Where it is useful to refer to some instrument or picture not reproduced here, such examples have been taken almost entirely from sources to which the reader may obtain easy access. It may be of interest to state that all the violins shown in this book are instruments in regular use to-day; it should not nowadays be necessary to say that the way to preserve an instrument is—to use it.

§ ii.

Plate I is a photograph of what is probably the finest viol now in existence, an instrument of such nobility of voice and structure that a touch of rhapsody is difficult to withstand. If the crabbed Gothic characters upon its manuscript label have not been read amiss, they spell

Hanns Wohar.

The only similar name recorded in the most elaborate list of luthiers is 'Hans Vollrat' who worked in Vienna early in the fifteenth century.¹ Unfortunately, no information is given as to the authority for the spelling 'Vollrat', and it is at least possible that a slight uncertainty about the reading of the label in this present viol, combined with a similar accident in transcribing from whatever documents are the basis of Lütgendorff's name, might reconcile the two variants. The magnificently carved head carries in front a single-headed eagle, displayed, of obvious heraldic significance, which would connect it with the Imperial House. The Emperor

¹ Lütgendorff, *Die Geigen und Lautenmacher*, Vol. II, p. 544. He gives dates of 1424 and 1436 to the name. See also Vol. I, p. 224.

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supposed to have adopted the double-headed eagle about 1434, but we cannot safely claim this as a definitive date;¹ and the single-headed charge continued to be borne armorially both by the King of the Romans and by those of distant connexion and by high officials, such as governors of provinces. Nevertheless, the instrument would seem to have undeniable claims to Austrian provenance and might be put at once to 'Vollrat's' credit, were it not for a point of doubt inside. When opened for repair, it was the expert opinion that it had never before had the belly removed and, if that opinion was sound, then certain strips of lining paper bearing printed words insist upon a date after about 1475; for the bibliographer of to-day is an exact scientist and early types have been thoroughly classified. The technique of the carving has been said to be 'probably late fifteenth century', but how far this is a sure guide must be left to the reader to judge.

Considering how very vague is our knowledge of this maker, it is possible to think of it as one of his last works, even perhaps completed by a son or by other hands; or else that the paper strips were inserted at some early occasion of masterly repair. The fine bass by Duiffoprout in the Donaldson collection at the Royal College of Music has very similar proportions, but the upper ends of its bouts are sharply cornered, while the lower ends flow as in the earlier instrument.²

A treble viol of outline like to that of the Vohar bass, in the Vienna collection, was made by Francesco Linarolo, who

¹ For a discussion on this point see Woodward and Burnett's *Treatise on Heraldry* (1892), Vol. I, pp. 252 et seq. The matter is very obscure, but after Sigismund's election the use of the double head seems to have become much more regular.

² Photographs of this instrument have been reproduced in many books upon the violin; perhaps the most recent one is in Miss Racster's *Chats on Fiddles Big and Little*, a work which should be included in every library of humorous literature.

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is known to have been working in Venice in the first half of the sixteenth century.¹ The tenor viol illustrated in Plate I bears much resemblance to the treble of Linarolo, not only in general outline but in some points of detail and it undoubtedly belongs to this period. Viols with this flowing line of body were made towards the end of the century, but in specimens of that date the width becomes more pronounced and something of the grace of these earlier aristocrats is lost.

Perhaps the conservative is the safest line to adopt and the ascription will not be disputed if this bass viol of 'Hans Vohar' is dated shortly before 1500. But apart from the name and from more general considerations, certain features particularly of the neck, suggest that a *distringas* should be placed upon an earlier date, in favour of this instrument. Whatever the true date may be, when it was opened there was seen in every detail of the work the sign-manual of one of the greatest craftsmen of any age. On the inside of the back and belly the hand of a master could be traced in the marks of the tooling; a hand that had betrayed itself over all from without and not least in the cutting of the superb sound holes, as perfect as the best of Stradivarius and, be it noted, almost exactly of his pattern.

A feature that stimulates inquiry is the bass bar, of normal viol proportions, which is carved directly out of the block from which the belly has been shaped and is beautifully finished. To the engineer's eye, the mechanical advantage of this must appear great and well worth the ingenuity demanded of the worker;² but from the fact that this construction was never adopted as a principle, it must be assumed

¹ A photograph will be found on Plate 16 of Julius Schlosser's sumptuous catalogue. He dates it 'about 1540', which is merely following Lütgendorff's approximate date around which this maker was known to be working; and this period is only fixed by the known date of Francesco's son.

² It is, though, much more difficult to construct that extremely rare thing a perfectly fitting bass bar.

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that makers had some objection to the homogeneous structure. Among other points, the well-arched back should be mentioned and the narrow neck, following the plane of the belly, a matter calling for later comparison with the practice of the seventeenth century. The entire instrument, save for some of the pegs and the bridge, is in unblemished virginity of condition, and it stands a monument to the ability of a period of which a famous musical historian once wrote that it was incapable of constructing any instruments fit to play anything worthy of the name of music upon.

The final test is, of course, its musical voice. This has great freedom in utterance and uniformity of quality throughout the entire range, with no wolf notes and with an infinity of gradation of volume. The tone colour is that of a typical viol, sonorous with a touch of reediness and quite unlike that of a violoncello. Here, perhaps it is a little more mellow than in instruments of the seventeenth century, as though it were some gentle lady of long lineage, too certain in her standing to be conscious of any need for assertion. The varnish, that business so dear to the heart of the violin connoisseur, is of a red-brown colour and has the mottled appearance of striature, like the cracking of bitumen in Reynolds's pictures. It is quite false to assume, as some do, that this effect is a disaster wrought by time upon an incompetent varnish; on the contrary, it was the result deliberately aimed at by some makers.

§ iii.

With the other instruments illustrated a brief treatment must suffice, for to describe in detail outward features is only to repeat what can readily be seen, and no description of words can convey much about the musical qualities. That all have excellence of tone is evidenced by the fact that they are in constant use by people of discrimination and taste—the poor instrument finds short shrift amongst those accustomed

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to playing in consort. Plate III shows a fine alto viol bearing the label

John Strong Sommerset.

Its curious shape represents a fashion of the sixteenth century and analogous instruments may be seen in the paintings of that period, of which *The Marriage of Cana* by Paolo Veronese is one familiar example. While instruments of this outline were occasionally made on the Continent fairly late in the seventeenth century,¹ the English viols after 1600 show an almost regular adherence to severity, and this viol certainly belongs to Elizabethan days. The instrument is well known, and a certain exhibition catalogue of bygone days described it as '17th century'.² The reason for this dating, which has been followed in other publications, is that the label was then thought to have the partial date '16 . . .' after the name, but when the viol was opened for repair the 'date' took flight—literally, for it was only an accidental grouping of dust particles. This instrument, which is now the property of Mr. Arnold Dolmetsch, is known to its owner as 'the Tortoise' and thereby hangs a pretty tale. The back is made of beautifully marked burr, the root of the ash, and John Strong has craftily selected it so that the pattern arranged itself exactly to the appearance of a tortoise, complete with head and tail. But observe the hidden meaning in this, whereby the craftsman has sent an undying pun down to posterity; for the classical name 'chelys' was used by writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to denote a viol,³ as 'testudo

¹ For example, the viols by Thomas Edlinger, Ausburg, 1672, and Ernst Busch of Nuremberg, 1644, in the Heyer collection.

² i.e. the Catalogue of the 1872 Exhibition at South Kensington, a pretentious volume illustrated with silver print photographs and priced at 12s.; undoubtedly one of the worst examples of the art of catalogue making, exasperating the reader to-day at every page by its lack of information and useless descriptions of ornamentation.

³ And later, for the violin family; cf. J. J. Walther's *Hortulus Chelicus*, Mayntz 1688 (second edition, 1694; with the same title).

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as for the lute, both having their origins in the same myth.

It is recorded by Homer, that Mercury finding a Tortoise, whose nerves or Chords, being dried and strained in the Sun, mellowed, with a touch, a pleasing sound, did thereupon make an instrument like unto it, which, after the name of the Tortoise, he called Chelys, [Testudo:]¹

An early treble by John Ross, the famous sixteenth-century London maker, is another example of the undulating outline, though the instrument, now in the Wildhagen collection, has been converted to a viola d'amore.

A treble viol illustrated in Plate IV bears many indications of early construction. The ribs are very deep and the large sound holes are placed low in relation to the bouts. Beneath the filth applied by some late hand, there has been disclosed a warm golden varnish. This instrument had unfortunately been converted to a viola, but the only new portion is the neck; the body was happily untouched and the fine head, covered with refreshing vigour, had been preserved. Although it bears no label, it may with safety be ascribed to England at the end of the sixteenth century. A small French treble viol with five strings, of the eighteenth century, is shown in Plate V.

§ iv.

Pausing for a moment to survey these illustrations, one notes that at four distinct types of sound holes are found. The bass is the pure *f* pattern. Those of the tenor are similar but of a more simple design, as in the corresponding treble by Guarneri already mentioned. This form is frequently found in

also, John Francis De La Fond, *A New System of Music* (1725), p. xxxviii.

I choose to say *Bass-Viol*, instead of *Chelys*.

Charles Butler, *Principles of Musik* (1636), p. 17. His phonetic spelling is here modernized, but only because it would require special type to print the original. Cf. Homer, *Hymn to Hermes* (ll. 24 and 153); or Shelley's translation.

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Italian viols of the sixteenth century, of which nearly a dozen examples are preserved in the Vienna collection.¹ The alto shows a sound hole sometimes designated as the 'flaming sword', which was, with a slight modification, later on to become rather a prerogative of the viola d'amore. In the trebles, the shape most usually associated with the viols is found, formed like the letter C. In the pictorial records of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, these C sound holes are most commonly shown reversed and not, as a herald would say of the later models, addorsed.

With the exception of the bass, the backs are flat, but this is by no means a regular feature of the viols, for quite a large proportion is found with the arched back. Nor are the sloping shoulders, meeting the neck at a tangent, a feature that can safely be used for definition, for many viols exist, and many more are depicted, showing the shoulders meeting the neck at right angles. In the engraving upon the title-page to Ganassi's treatise of 1542, the shoulders turn inwards, for the neck to issue as from a corolla; this feature may also be seen in the viola da braccia shown in the well-known engraving of the great Lyonese maker Gaspard Duiffoprout, dated 1562, while the viol in this picture has shoulders of a more normal pattern.²

How early the viol assumed the outward shape most commonly associated with its name may be seen in many early sixteenth-century pictures. Raphael, who died in 1520, shows a particularly good example amongst the wreckage of St Cecilia's instruments, in the picture at Bologna. In Hans Baldung-Grien's *Allegory of Music* at Nuremberg, a tenor viol

¹ These may be studied in the catalogue already referred to; but the photographs alone may be dangerously misleading, for many of the instruments are in states of late conversion. The meticulously careful descriptions of the able editor should invariably be read in conjunction with the illustrations.

² The spelling of the name follows the definite study of Dr. Henry Coutagne: *Gaspard Duiffoprout et les Luthiers Lyonnais du XVI^e siècle*, Paris, 1893.

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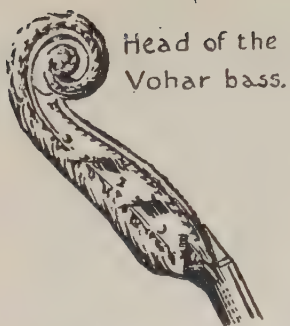
is shown adumbrating the violin outline, but with sound holes placed very low.¹ In these, as in even earlier cases, it will be seen that the corner was no new institution when the violin came to be developed half a century later.

The heads of viols deserve a moment of our attention, for even in their diversity there is something characteristic as contrasted to the almost unchanging scroll of the violins. With the magnificent carving of the peg box and the scroll of the bass by Hanss Vohar a chapter of eulogy might be occupied; we must be content with remarking upon the 'open' pattern of the scroll, a feature that was to receive adoption in England some two centuries later in the bass viols of Barak Norman. The tenor has a closed scroll, but of rather more simple design than the one typical of the violin; and in the treble will be seen what was one of the most usual effects in the viol's appearance, a human head. Plate VI shows a particularly interesting head from a treble viol which, though it bears no label, possesses all the characteristics of an English instrument of the early seventeenth century. A head precisely similar in every respect is found upon the fine bass viol in the possession of Canon Galpin, which has the following inscription upon its label:

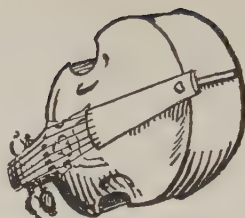
Henrie Jaye in Southwarke. 1611.

Sometimes the head takes the form of that of a lion or of an eagle, or some grotesque invention of the craftsman; or, may be, some heraldic symbol such as the ball held in a claw. The ordinary scroll appears ever and anon, and in the eighteenth-century French instruments it becomes more common.

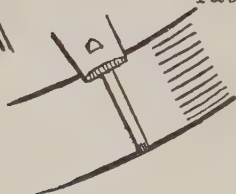
As far as possible, pictorial examples have been chosen from the readily accessible publication *Musical Instruments in Pictures* (William Reeves), which, in spite of its title, is another product of German industry. A representative selection of nearly 200 pictures of musical interest has been made from the European art of five centuries and it offers a most useful means of reference.



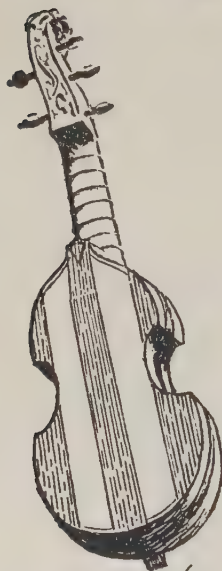
Head of the
Vohar bass.



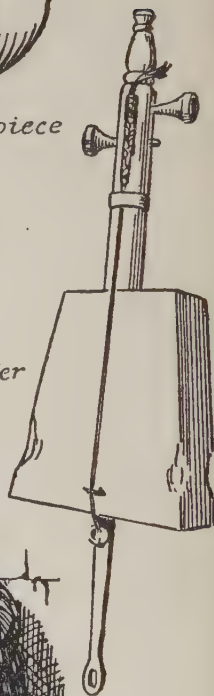
Tail-piece



Rabab esh-shd'ier
(after Lane)



Guersan, 1763.



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§ v.

The bouts of the viol, when it departs from the 'guitar' and the fantastic in outline, are usually square at the corners, but the flourish associated with the violin family is sometimes seen; and this is not restricted to those bass viols which have the outline of the violoncello. The table and back most frequently finish flush with the ribs, but there is again no constancy to be used for definition, for there is often a projection as in violins. A charming, but perhaps not very useful, feature of many viols of all sizes is a small 'rose' carved out of the wood of the belly just at the end of the finger-board.

From the early seventeenth century onwards, the backs of the smaller viols were not uncommonly made of five or seven strips of alternate light and dark wood, an effect that is occasionally carried into the ribs. These backs are often supported by one or two thin narrow bars glued transversely. In those viols with flat backs there is of necessity a thin strip of wood, about two inches wide in the trebles, placed inside, across the instrument and the sound post rests approximately upon the middle line of this strip.

Viols, like lutes and guitars, were sometimes made with enough ornamentation to delight the heart of a curio dealer. Bottrigaro dubs them '*stromenti non usati*', and when they came from the hands of a good maker they were indeed most probably intended more for show than for use, constructed either as gifts for the powerful or panderings to the tasteless opulent. But their existence has not been in vain, for this type, with its ornate inlay of mother-of-pearl, ivory, and brightly coloured woods, has provided a gold mine for the forger of 'old' instruments. The seventeenth-century firm of Tielke in Hamburg seems specially to have delighted in turning out the sort of instruments with which collectors love to fill their cabinets; and the musician is content to leave them with this choice.

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Three points yet remain to be spoken of before we leave these outward signs. The form of the neck is seen to undergo certain modifications as the centuries pass; as in the early violins, its direction is at first in the plane of the belly, and England, at least, seems to have kept faithful to this design up to the end of the seventeenth century. But on the Continent the fashion arose after 1600 for having it set slightly back. Rousseau, in the passage implicit with the reputation of Tudor instrumentation, quoted above on page 40, claims the credit of this innovation for the French, when he continues:

mais aussi il faut avoüer que les Faiseurs d'Instruments François ont donné la dernière perfection à la Viole, lors qu'ils ont trouvé le secret de renverser un peu le Manche en arrière, & d'en diminuer l'épaisseur; car par ce moyen les Maîtres qui jouent de cet Instrument exécutent avec beaucoup plus de facilité, & il n'y a point de Viole d'Angleterre, où l'on ne soit obligé de faire mettre un Manche à la Française pour s'en servir commodément.¹

As, however, he would seem from another passage to date the emergence of the French viol school in the early days of the seventeenth century, other countries must have been quick to adopt the new practice; for the tenor viol made in 1672 by Thomas Edlinger of Augsburg, in the Heyer collection, has a neck thrown violently back, and other German models of the period exhibit this tendency.

Another matter for which the French makers at the end of the seventeenth century appear, from existing instruments, to have been responsible, is the great increase in the width of the neck and finger-board, while preserving a characteristic thinness. In the viols of the early sixteenth century the same number of strings is accommodated upon a much narrower finger-board; in French bass viols of the early eighteenth century, the neck is often of such generous proportions that

¹ Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la Viole*, 1687, p. 22.

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Amourol, that cultured giant, could have played upon them with ease. Some claim that the narrow neck of the early examples is less convenient for the music involving the holding of many full chords which is characteristic of the later school, but an accomplished violist with whom the matter has been discussed has not experienced any such difficulty when playing on a very early instrument. The tail-piece, for the attachment of the nether ends of the strings, had assumed early a form that remained, for the most part, a standard feature in the appearance of viols to the end of their career. The tail-piece of a violin is attached to the bottom by a piece of gut; in the viols, the tail-piece is necessarily much wider and is a trapezoid in plan, the tapering end overhanging the belly. A rectangular slot fits over a wooden peg, glued to the end of the viol; at the upper end of this is a projection to retain the tail-piece in place when pulled by the tension of the strings. In sixteenth-century Italy, however, the gut attachment was largely used, as were the simplified *f* sound-holes to be seen in the Tenor Viol on Plate II.

One word of warning is needful to any reader whose interest may be sufficiently awakened to inspire a visit to the musical exhibits in certain public museums. Many instruments in such collections are either in states of conversion or they have suffered 'restoration' under ignorant hands. And what shall be said of a cataloguer who described a bass viol converted to a 'cello as 'an instrument in original condition showing the transition stage between the viola da gamba and the violoncello'?

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CHAPTER VII

THE DIFFICULTIES OF HISTORY

§ i.

THIS series has not been designed to embrace much delving into the evolution of those instruments which are found full fledged at the opening of our period. But into the vast literature about the history of the violin many other forms have been impressed through a confusion of ideas. Therefore, while the attractions of facile speculation must be resisted, it is a duty to indicate certain definite lines of evidence upon which future study should proceed.

§ ii.

When approaching this problem, it is essential to clear the mind of all associations of a date later than the beginning of the seventeenth century. After that time, certain forms have become eliminated and the pre-eminence of others inhibit our realization of the individual natures of the submerged.

In the year 1500 the violin is barely, if at all, in existence and in the fifteenth century there are, as we said in the Prologue, three definite types. Each type shows highly characteristic features that are easy to recognize. The viola has its downward position and overhand bowing; the rebec has its half pear-shaped body, held on the shoulder or against the breast; and the lyra, held like the rebec, has its squarish flat body, long bow, and, usually, bourdon strings.

If we find, in the sculpture and illuminations of the fourteenth, thirteenth, and twelfth centuries, representations of instruments which severally display the features of the three typical families of the fifteenth century, it is surely logical

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to assume, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, that these are indeed portrayals of those same three types.

The rebec may be dismissed for the present, as it is steadily with us from the tenth century onwards, in body if not in name. There are two other instruments frequently depicted from the twelfth century, if not from even earlier. In outline they are squarish, but sometimes with incurving sides and even with elaborate bouts; one is held on the knees with the bow held viol-fashion, while the other is held over the arm. Not once or twice but many times, these two types will be found in company in the same work of art.¹ It is suggested here that these two instruments are respectively the viol and the lyra.

But it has been customary for writers to assume that both forms represent one and the same instrument. To this they apply a name that is common in the literature of that period, *lutebe* or *Rybye*. As this name fades out of use in the fifteenth century, the creators of this imaginary instrument have to say that the viol and the lyra arose from its ashes. All this is misleading. The viol and the lyra are too utterly unlike to have had a common ancestor; it is far more likely that they derive from widely separate stocks. The difficulty has probably arisen partly from the failure to recognize the highly individual nature of the *lyra da braccia* and partly from placing too great a reliance upon the nomenclature employed by medieval writers. The usage of names in the vernacular in those days is very uncertain, but with the writers of Latin it is nearly hopeless. This is a matter of great importance to the antiquarian study of the bowed instruments, but here it must be left undeveloped.

After having examined a large mass of evidence, the writer

For example, the well-known sculptures from St. George's at Boscherville, now preserved at Rouen; and the archway of St. Iago, at Compostella. Both works date A.D. c. 1200.

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feels convinced that, in the art of the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth centuries, we see respectively the rebec, the lyra, and the viol, developing perhaps, but each upon its characteristic path.

§ iii.

It is necessary, however, to say something upon the word 'Rubebe', though we shall not join in that hurly-burly of the philologists which centres on the word 'Fiddle'. The position is by no means so clear as established authorities would have us believe. It is usually stated that the bowed instruments are importations from the East. The Arab name for a bowed instrument was *Rebáb*, from whence obviously *Rubebe*, *Rybybe*, and the hundred other permutations on those letters. A diminutive is *Rubecchino*, soon truncated to *Rebec*, so that 'Rubebe' is the large flat instrument of the Middle Ages, a gift from the Moors, while 'Rebec' became the denomination of the higher-pitched instrument of rounded body and possibly older, but still Eastern, origin.

This appears at first sight simple and convincing, but an examination of the principal factors leaves serious doubts, even if it does not provide an equally convincing and simple alternative. It is certain that, in the sixteenth century, *Rabel* was the Castilian word for a rebec, and by contemporary authorities it is classified as an Arabic word.¹ 'Lute' is proverbially *al 'aud* of the Moors, having reached them perhaps from Persia in our Dark Ages; and where, if not in Spain, would one expect to find things of Moorish origin? Yet from the day of the Arch-Priest of Hita, the *vihuela* was the means to serious music in the Peninsula, and in musical essentials *vihuela* is both lute and viol.² The

¹ e.g. Minshieu's edition (1599) of Percyvelle.

² Bottrigarò, in *Il Desiderio* (1599), uses the word 'viuola' for 'viol' throughout.

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lute in its familiar aspect had small place in the national life and was regarded as the 'vihuela' of the northern states.¹

If the round-bodied lute came from the East, and if the flat-bodied vihuela is descended from the Roman cithara, then that distinction, *guitarra moresca* and *guitarra latina*, found in early literature, applies well enough. But in that case why did the Spanish prefer the latter type, except for the impolite rabel and bandurria? Was it political influence? Or is there something wrong with those appellations?

§ iv.

An examination of the Arab use of the word *Rebáb* does not support its association with an instrument, either round- or flat-bodied, held and bowed like a violin.

The information about to be quoted is comparatively recent, but against that must be set the innate conservatism of Eastern races; and Edward William Lane, to whose work reference is made, was particularly well equipped with natural and acquired aptitudes for the precise study he made of the Egyptian manners at the end of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, before they had been greatly touched by the Western civilization that was soon to envelop them. Few students of a strange race have dealt with music in the spirit of knowledge and thoroughness that he brought to his book; and his clear, direct statements, based so obviously upon a complete grounding in the whole subject, are a benefaction to all who use his work.²

The first thing that strikes one in his description of the

Juan Bermudo, *Declaraci6n de Instrumentos*, Orsuna, 1555, fol. xcvi. Here the lute is referred to as 'vihuela de Flandres'.

The following references are to Chapters XVIII and XXI of his classic work, *The Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*.

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instruments is that he compares those played with the bow to viols:¹

The 'kemengeh' is a kind of viol,

or

A curious kind of viol, called 'rabáb',

and, as it is impossible to imagine that he was not entirely conversant with the violin, this seems, in the light of what follows, a tacit indication that he was aware of the European viol in its true use. As he was not born until 1801, this would imply that the viols had lingered on later than we are accustomed to think. But the significance of his use of the name is only apparent from his illustration. The first and most dignified form of bowed instrument is the *Kemengeh*; he describes it in the most detailed manner, with exact drawings executed with the unflinching aid of the camera lucida. This instrument had two strings, but the small body is hemispherical or even more rounded; the method of bowing depicted is, in essentials, precisely that of the viols. To this name he adds a footnote:

A friend (a native of Egypt) has observed to me, since the first edition of this work was printed, that 'rabáb' would be a more proper term for this instrument, being the general Arabic name for a viol; but I never heard it called in Egypt by any other name than 'kemengeh'. It is also thus called in Syria.

Later on he describes another form of the instrument:

A curious kind of viol, called 'rabáb', is much used by poor singers, as an accompaniment to the voice. There are two kinds of viol which bear this name: the 'rabáb el-mughannee' (or singer's viol), and the 'rabáb esh-shá'er' (or poet's viol); which differ from each other only in this, that the former has two chords, and the latter but one. The latter is that of which I give an engraving; but it will be observed that it is convertible into the

¹ Compare Doughty, Vol. I, Chap. II.

Some, to make the strangers cheer, chanted to the hoarse chord of the Arab viol.

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former kind, having two pegs. . . . This instrument is always used by the public reciters of the romance of Aboo-Zeyd, in chanting the poetry. The reciter of this romance is called a *shá'er* (or poet); and hence the instrument is called 'the poet's viol' and 'the Aboo-Zeydee viol'. The *shá'er* himself uses this instrument; and another performer on the same kind of *rabáb* generally accompanies him.

Now the body of this instrument is trapezoid in outline, with embryonic bouts, and it is composed of a frame of wood, the front covered with parchment. This body is very much larger than an equivalent length of string than that of the *kemengeh*, and it offers a direct counterpart to the ribbed instruments of Europe. In a later chapter he gives a large illustration of

A *shá'er*, with his accompanying violist, and part of his audience.

In this picture the poet is not actually playing: he holds up his bow to emphasize some point of his story. But regard his companion! Every detail of his attitude is exactly that of some one playing one of the smaller viols. The bowing hand is just completing a *tiré* stroke in perfect accordance with all the directions of Jean Rousseau; and, were it not for the long support peg which supports it on the ground, and for its single ring, the instrument might pass for a tenor viol.

If this is the Arab *rabáb*, how can we believe that its name came to be associated with two instruments, the *lyra da raccia* and the *rebec*, that differ from it so violently in method of use? Rather should we expect to find *Rubebe* or *bybe* connected solely with the viols.¹

Yet the implication of its use seems to have been more of the *rebec*. Compare the following couplet from the fourteenth-century translation of the *Vetula Ovid*, by Jean Lefevre:

Viele, luth et guisterne
Et la rebebe à corde terne

can only quote this at third-hand, trusting that the MS.—which may itself be a copy—has been correctly rendered).

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§ v.

Confidence is further shaken by finding a very similar word attached to something entirely different. That friend of our youth, the jew's harp, is a very ancient instrument; Mersenne, whose great learning was combined with a restless and inquisitive mentality, calls the jew's harp a Rebube.¹ With this seventeenth-century reference may be compared the much earlier French name for the same instrument, Rebute, to which influence the 'ributhe' of the Scottish fifteenth-century poem, *Houlgate*, may be due.²

§ vi.

In reading those passages in works of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, such as the familiar quotation from Jerome of Moravia, it should be remembered, when tuning in fifths is mentioned, that this interval is characteristic of both the *lyra da braccia* and the *rebec*. But originally the *rebec* bore the name of *lyra*, as may be seen in the St. Blasius manuscript, and it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to state with confidence to what instruments these writers refer.

Perhaps this chapter has resulted in more destruction than building, but it may have helped to show that, in dealing with early history, confusion exists in the attempts to correlate the mass of literary and artistic evidence between the twelfth and the fifteenth centuries. This difficulty is only increased when the correlation is extended to cover Oriental origins.

¹ Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie universelle*, 1636: Liure Septiesme des Instrumens, Prop. XXV.

la Trompe que quelques-uns nomment Gronde, ou Rebube.
and *Instrumentorum Harmonicorum*, 1636, Liber Quartus, Prop. XIX, p. 165.

Galli verò hoc instrumentum vocant Trompe, & Rebube.

² Francis Galpin, *Old English Instruments of Music* (1910), Chap. XIV, p. 269.

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A suggestion may be made for a future reducing to order of the chaos of words that represent Fiddle, Viol, and Rubbe in various languages and periods. All the references will have to be tabulated with full notes upon their context and other relevant factors. Certain instruments are more likely to have been used for definite purposes than others; and, from such situations, guiding hints would throw light upon other occasions. This would be an infinitely laborious task and would demand an unbiased and encyclopaedic mind, but only from some such investigation does there seem hope that infinity of knowledge may come.

CHAPTER VIII THE BOW AND ITS USE

§ i.

THE bow of the viol knows no Tourte in its history; like the instrument for which it was used, it had some slight changes in design as fashions passed, but for at least a century and a half its quality remains the same. In the best period, the first half of the seventeenth century, the bow was constructed with a beauty of workmanship equivalent in grace to the movements of the hand using it. The length of the hair is from 23 inches to 24 inches, according to the size of the viol,¹ but seldom varying outside these limits even late in the eighteenth century. The spread of the hair is much less wide than in the modern violin bow, being approximately 35 of an inch, and the whole bow is very much lighter.

Of the sixteenth-century bow it is difficult to speak with authority. Simpson in *The Division Viol* says 27 inches, another example of his small

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confidence owing to the lack of indisputable specimens; indeed the whole business of dating early bows must be admitted to be speculative and judgement can only be made after long study of such other guides as the art of the times. But it does not demand external evidence to postulate a serviceable bow, for without so necessary a part of the instrument the music could not have been played; and if it could not have been played, it would never have been composed. If historians of the bow would consider obvious truths like this, instead of pinning their faith upon crude woodcuts, we might be spared an infinity of nonsense.

In some of the earliest bows preserved, the attachment at the head is by a simple binding, though in others there is a well-developed peak with the plug fitting. One thing may be stated with confidence about all the viol bows (and violin bows, too) before the early eighteenth century: the tension was obtained by an outward bending of the wood and not by the partial straightening of an inward camber as in the modern violin bow.¹ By what means this tension was adjusted at the nut is doubtful, for the date of the introduction of the screw-nut is uncertain,² and many old bows have survived with screw-nuts added by later hands. One common method was for a removable nut to slip in under the hair, and the writer has a friend who has used such a bow for some years with entire success. Naturally an outwardly bent bow does not call for the amount of adjustment required in a cambered bow.

The distance between the hair and the stick at the nut is much wider than in the violin bow, to allow the fingers to take their proper position. The head, at first little more than a thickening of the end of the stick, terminates in a long and graceful peak, but this is inclined to diminish as the head

¹ The practical bearing of this is discussed later. See *infra*, p. 202.

² It was certainly in use in the seventeenth century.

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comes more pronounced. The seventeenth-century bow received a lavish attention from the hands of its makers, but their decorative sense was controlled by a masterly restraint and those few specimens of elaborate inlay that are the pride of one or two collectors may be set aside as curiosities. The custom was to cut into the octagonal stick eight flutings, which were carried up into the head;¹ and notice that this is an excellent device mechanically, for while the strength is reserved the bulk is reduced, as in an H-shaped girder. At the other end of the bow, for eight or nine inches from the 'p', there is a raised line in the flutings increasing the decorative effect while providing a practically cylindrical surface for the fingers. Sometimes the stick is perfectly circular in cross-section and made of snake wood with beautiful markings. Towards the head of these bows the wood tapers to a diameter barely half that of the portion near the nut. Such bows are the prize of the violist, for they have a lightness and suppleness that seem the perfect adaptation for the music of the period. Even in the later eighteenth century the bow maintains its characteristic length and weight, but is becoming affected by the contemporary changes in the violin bow; and in the shape of the stick and of the head, and in the tentative camber, but never in the width and depth of the nut, these changes can be identified.

A group of viol bows from the early seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth centuries is shown in Plate VII, and details of the head and weight will be found in the Appendix.

§ ii.

The basic facts of the use of the bow upon the viols have been indicated in a previous chapter and it will be appreciated that the complete art of bowing cannot be taught by

¹ See Plate VIII.

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a book. Certain important details may with discretion be brought to the notice of the practical reader, for they are the fundamentals of a good style and that, in this matter as in so much else, implies grace and ease.

That there was a divergence in practice in the proximity of the hand to the nut is apparent not only from pictures but from the writers.

This according to Mr. Simpsons Directions.

Yet I must confess, that for *my own Part*, I could never *Use so well*, as when I hold It 2 or 3 *Inches off the Nut* (more or less according to the *Length or Weight of the Bow*, for *Good Poyzing of* . . . But 'tis possible that by *Use*, I might have made It as *Familiar My self* as It was to *Him*.¹

Before bringing back a few of the more important details of the true use of the viol bow, it will be well once again to lay emphasis upon that deeply set distinction between this manner of playing and that of the violin; for within this difference is embodied an age-long separation in musical spirit between the two families. Mersenne's clear conception of this separation has already been quoted,² but it is set out with even more directness in a passage of Rousseau.

. . . & prendre garde dans les mouvemens gays de trop marquer afin de ne pas sortir de l'esprit du Jeu de l'Instrument, qui ne veut pas estre traité à la maniere du Violon, dont le propre est d'animer, au lieu que le propre du Dessus de Viole est de flater.

And these are but two out of very many expressions of acute understanding of the right uses of instruments that may be found throughout the literature of two centuries, from Agricola to Hubert le Blanc.

On appelle violes celles des quelles les gentilhommes marchans et autres gens de vertu passent leur temps. Le violon est cel

¹ Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument* (1676), Part III, Chap. VI, p. 248.

² See *supra*, p. 26.

³ Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la Viole*, 1686, p. 73.

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quel on use en danserie communément, et à bonne cause; car est plus facile à accorder, la quinte étant plus douce a ouïr que quarte. Il est aussi plus facile à porter, qui est chose fort cessaire, en conduisant quelque noce ou momerie.¹

It is the method of bowing that is one of the most important factors contributing to this distinction and its full implications are ably expressed by one most qualified in knowledge and practice to speak.

The bow of the violin or violoncello being held under the hand, the wrist and arm are higher than the bow, and their weight is upon it. The accented note being played with a down bow, which begins right under the hand or very near it, feels the full length of the arm and wrist in addition to their weight; the up-bow note, which begins at the point of the bow, receives no benefit from this weight, and only a very small fraction of their length. Thus in the violin everything concurs in giving preponderance to the down stroke. Skilled players endeavour, and succeed after long practice, in equalising the strokes and gaining full command of the tone; but they are working against nature, and cannot do it with the ease and repose of the viol player, who does everything in his favour and does these things without effort.

This he compares to the effect in the viol bowing:

The arm and wrist are under the bow, in an easy and natural position, in no way weighing on it. The accented stroke being naturally *forward*, begins at the point of the bow, where the pressure of the fingers is least strong. The conditions being reversed with the unaccented backward stroke, it follows that everything concurs to promote evenness of tone. This bowing is easy to learn; far more so than violin-bowing.²

Philibert Jambe de Fer, *Epitome musical de tons, sons et accordz ès voix humaines, lutes d'Alleman, fleustes à 9 trous, violes et violons* . . . Lyon, 1556.

The quotation and the title of the book are taken from Vol. I of Lütgendorff's *Orgel und Lautenmacher* (1922), p. 94. It is with great regret that I am obliged to be content with this glimpse of what may be a work of critical evidential value. This book seems unknown to both Eitner and Fétis.

Arnold Dolmetsch, *The Interpretation of the Music of the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries* (1915), Chap. VII, Sect. V (pp. 446-9).

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At this point, a restraint in touching contemporary criticism is overborne, for the following view is too radically false to be passed without comment:

The bowing of the viols is so rudimentary—if our present knowledge is complete—that phrasing, the musical virtue *par excellence* is virtually non-existent; we may therefore allow ourselves to use modern violins and bows for the old consorts if we wish to play music which hardly comes into the category of 'the world's great music'.¹

The last opinion is not for discussion in this chapter, but its author, who wisely remains anonymous, is welcome to a taste which will bring a smile to those who know *The Four Note Pavan* and Michael Easte's *Triumphavi*. But the passage about the viol method of bowing is poorly expressed: it is not the 'phrasing' that is 'non-existent' but the author's 'present knowledge', for he is only repeating a passage that occurs in the malignant ignorance of Burney.² There are two things that must be insisted upon. Firstly, long practical experience by many players, some of whom are also accomplished violinists or 'cellists, has shown that not only is the viol method the ideal one for the most subtle and expressive phrasing upon the viols, but that this necessary phrasing for viol music simply cannot be obtained with the violins and their method. No better example of this can be found than

¹ *Old Music and its Instruments*, *The Dolmetsch View*, *The Times*, Sept. 1st, 1928. I suspect the same hand in the review of my first volume, which accused me of 'totally disregarding' this alleged superiority of the violin bowing. Had I 'totally disregarded' such a matter, I should, of course, have been unfitted to write at all on the subject.

² See Vol. III, p. 357; also the passages mentioned in the footnote, *supra*, p. 34. One need not mince words about Burney, since he indulges in the foulest of superlatives; for the last century and a half 'historians' have followed on another in copying out his personal prejudices without thinking to look further. One wonders if any other single writer has had such a long-continued evil influence. Fortunately the points at issue are subject to practical test and his falsity is proved now that these have been applied.

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he almost unrecognizable caricature that emerges when Byrd's *Fantasy for Six Viols* is played on a small chamber orchestra, as it often is played, thanks to an unfortunate edition of the score. And, secondly, why should any one try to confuse two things that belong to such different elements? Each method is fundamental and belongs to its own instrument.

§ iii.

The main thoroughfare of the technique of bowing may conveniently be indicated by extracts from the contemporary tutors, leaving the more intricate but no less necessary by-roads to be studied in the complete passages from which extracts are made here. And let the reader not think that because our quotations are mostly from writers of the later seventeenth century, that these speak of a new art, for the essence of all of it may be found in works as old as the first half of the sixteenth century; and these older masters were most clearly describing a practice that had been long established.

The quotation from Christopher Simpson given in Chapter V¹ continues:

Holding the Bow in this posture, stretch out your arm, and draw it first over one String and then another; crossing them in right angle, at the distance of two or three Inches from the Bridge. Make each several String yield a full clear sound; and order your knees so, that they may be no impediment to the motion of your bow.²

To those modern historians who are so sure that the tone of string players 'must have sounded horrible' at this period,³ the following admonition may in particular be addressed:

Now being Thus far *ready for Exercise*, attempt the *Striking of*

See *supra*, p. 32.

The Division Viol (1667), p. 3.

³ See Vol. I of this series, p. 8.

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*your Strings; but before you do That, Arm your self with Preparative Resolutions to gain a Handsom—Smooth—Sweet—Smart—Clear—Stroak; or else Play not at all: For if your Viol be never so Good, if you have an Unhandsom—Harsh—Rugged—Scratching, Scraping—Stroak . . . your Viol will seem Bad and your Play Worse.*¹

The most complete details of the motion of the bow indicated by Simpson are to be found in the treatise of Jean Rousseau, the whole of whose appropriate chapter should receive the closest attention.² It is, however, too long for quotation here and the main points of the actions of the hand and arm may with convenience be epitomized. The forward, accented stroke is known as the *poussé*; it begins at the point of the bow. The elbow is well away from the body and the hand turned back; hand and arm move forward together until near the end of the stroke, when the arm stops and the hand, turning upon the wrist, completes the stroke. The hand and arm are now in a position to begin the backward, unaccented stroke, called the *tiré*. Again the hand and arm move together until near the end of the stroke, when the arm stops and the hand continues the stroke, coming to rest in the position for the beginning of the *poussé*. When the total length of the bow is not required, the stroke is performed in exactly the same manner, the portion from the middle to the peak being used. There is an exquisite grace in this use of a bow; and the manner in which the hand and bow 'flow' after the arm in the *tiré* and then the easy carriage forward of the *poussé*, appear natural and gentle and symbolic of the voice they produce.

'It is necessary when playing,' says Rousseau, *que le bois de l'Archet panche un peu en bas, afin que la main*

¹ Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument* (1676), Part III, Chap. VI, p. 248. See also Agricola, edition of 1545, folio 35 verso.

² Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la Viole* (1687), Chap. III, *La maniere de tenir & conduire l'Archet*.

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porte naturellement & ne soit pas contrainte, & il faut aussi prendre garde qu'il ne panche pas trop, de peur que touchant les cordes cela ne fasse un mauvais effet.¹

The care with which accentuation and rhythm were studied naturally finds an echo in the directions for the use of the bow and what is here quoted will be found foreshadowed with definition in the works of Agricola and Ganassi. If the latter has not been quoted in this connexion, it is because of the convenience of Simpson's English; but a doubting reader may study for himself the elaboration of sixteenth-century technique in the work itself, for it is now readily available in photographic facsimile.

When you see an even Number of Quavers or Semiquavers, as 4, 6, 8. You must begin with your Bow forward; yea, though the Bow were employed forward in the next Note before them. But if the Number be odd, as 3, 5, 7; (which alwayes happens for reason of some Prick-Note or odd Rest,) the first of that odd Number must be played with the Bow backward. This is the most proper motion of the Bow, though not absolutely without some exception: for sometimes the quickness of the Notes may force the contrary. . . . Also in quick Notes skipping from the Treble to the Bass, and so persued, are best express'd with contrary Bows.²

A matter of some debate in writers of the seventeenth century is the correct management of the elbow.

I told you before that you must stretch out your Arm streight, which posture (playing long Notes) you will necessarily move your shoulder Joint; but if you stir that Joint in quick Notes, it will cause the whole body to shake; which (by all means) must be avoyded; as also any other indecent Gesture. Quick Notes therefore must be express'd by moving some Joint nearer the end; which is generally agreed upon to be the Wrist. The

ibid., p. 34.

Christopher Simpson, *The Division Viol* (1667), p. 6. Not only is this direction found in Agricola and Ganassi (and stated with precision), but it is given by Cerreto, p. 332.

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question then arising is about the menage of the Elbow-Joint; concerning which there are two different opinions. Some will have it kept stiff; Insomuch, that I have heard a judicious Violist positively affirm, that if a Scholar can but attain to the playing of Quavers with his Wrist, keeping his Arm streight and stiff in the Elbow-Joint, he hath got the mastery of the Bow-Hand. Others contend that the motion of the Wrist must be strengthened and assisted by a compliance or yielding of the Elbow-Joint unto it, and they, to back their Argument, produce for instance a person famous for the excellency of his Bow-hand, using a free and loose Arm. To deliver my own opinion; I do much approve the streightness of the Arm, especially in Beginners, because it is the means to keep the Body upright, which is a commendable posture. I can also admit the Stiffness of the Elbow, in Smooth and Swift Division; for which it is most properly apt; But Cross and Skipping Division cannot (I think) be so well express'd without some compliance or yielding of the Elbow-Joint unto the motion of the Wrist. To gain this motion of the Wrist, the ordinary direction is, to draw the Hand (in moving the Bow to and fro) a little after the Arm. Or you may try how you can play a first Example of *Quavers*¹ by moving your Wrist only, keeping your Arm streight in the Elbow-Joint; a little practice will effect it. This Motion of compliance or looseness of the Wrist we mention, is chiefly in *Demisemiquaver* for, in *Quavers*, and *Semiquavers* too, we must allow so much stiffness of the Wrist as may command the Bow *on*, and *off* the String at every Note, if occasion so require.²

To this long discussion, so dull, we fear, for the ordinary reader, yet so important for the practical student, an addendum may be added from the cautious sincerity of Thomas Mace.

So likewise, for the *Exact Straitness of the Bow-Arm*, which Some do *Contend for*, I could *never do so well*, as with my Arm, (*straight enough, yet*) *something Plying, or Yielding to an Agile Bending*: and which I do conceive most *Familiarly Natural*.

¹ Not reproduced here.

² Christopher Simpson, *The Division Viol* (1667), pp. 7 and 8.

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For I would have no *Posture*, *Urg'd*, *Disputed*, or *Contended for*; that should *Cross*, or *Force Nature*.¹

One small but typical point in the use of the bow may be noted, quoting an Elizabethan author lest the Restoration be thought to have held the stage too long.

In coming from the *Trebles* [strings] of the Viol, to the *Base* . . . you must somewhat thrust the neck of the Viol from you, and shrink in the bow hand, to come fitly vnto it.²

Of the use of the bow in playing full chords upon the viol, some instructions will be quoted in the section upon the viol as a solo instrument, for such passages do not occur in consort playing.

§ iv.

In a few pictorial records there may be seen one or two departures from the strict letter of the law of bowing as laid down above, but never are the players in serious consort. An example of this may be seen in Veronese's *Marriage of Cana*, where the viols are held across the knees: that this practice was not uncommon with the less dignified class of player in the sixteenth century is evident from the severity with which Ganassi explicitly condemns it; he is a martinet for precise attitude and correct usage and will have nothing to do with what he dubs 'atto di moresca'.³ His early chapters upon the movements of the hands and position of the body are profoundly interesting and give one of our most valuable records of the established practice amongst the cultured musicians of his day.

This crosswise attitude of the viol, despite its impolite associations, has certain claims upon attention. Is it too fanciful to see in it a reference to the times when the plucked and the

¹ Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument* (1676), Part III, Chap. VI, p. 248.

² Thomas Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke*, 1603, sig. C ii (verso).

³ Silvestro Ganassi, *Regola Rubertina*, Vol. I, 1542, Chaps. I and II.

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bowed vihuela were almost one? In solo music for the viol there is often a pizzicato passage and in an elaborate combination of bowing and plucking it might have been found convenient to hold the instrument somewhat after the fashion of a guitar. There is an engraved portrait of Marin Marais, late in the seventeenth century, in which that famous violist is holding his bass viol across his knees, plucking out an air with his fingers.

The curious may sometimes happen upon a sixteenth-century picture or engraving showing the viol bowed in a manner strangely unorthodox. The right hand is passed to the farther side of the instrument so that the bow has its point in the position where a normal player's hand would be seen. The representations of this, though few, are just sufficient for it to be impossible to dismiss it as stupidity of the artists'; nor were the painters of those days given to foolish error. No mention of this manner of use is to be found in any text-book of the period; that it is not impossible so to bow a viol, trial has proved, but the inconveniences are considerable and the limitations on the length of the stroke would seem to inhibit it from use in serious music.¹

CHAPTER IX

THE FINGER-BOARD

§ i.

OF the finger-board and of the movements of the hand thereon, choice of treatment is limited to the elaborate treatise or to the statement of the guiding principles; and for

¹ Two examples ready of access may be quoted. In the publication, *Musical Instruments in Pictures*, already referred to, it will be seen in Plate 24, taken from Mattias Grünewald's curiously conceived altar-piece at Isenheim. The viol itself shares in the general strangeness. In the picture of Sir Henry Unton's life in our National Portrait Gallery, one of the musicians, in the group which plays for the Masque of his marriage, holds his bow in like manner.

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his work the latter must be accepted. The finger-board upon the viols had approximately three-quarters of the length of the vibrating string, so that the second octave upon any string was reached at the very end of the board. Sometimes it falls a little short of this, and indeed for the division viol Simpson ordains

Its length, full two parts of three, from the Nut to the Bridge.¹

Its shape, for arching and for width, is shown in the *Division Viol* by a diagram, in exact relation to the bridge. Above the seven frets it later became a practice to set one extra fret at

the distance of an Octave from the open Strings (which is the middle betwixt the Nut and the Bridge)²

its purpose being to provide

a good Guide to your Hand, when you stop that part of the finger-board.³

As the bowing of the viols differs from that of the violins, so is there a different way with the hand upon the neck. In it we shall notice yet another factor in close relationship to the lute.

For the carriage of our left hand vpon the Lute, is likewise justly to be obserued upon the base Viol, as shall bee more plainly declared in his due place.⁴

The difference from the rival instrument, to be seen in the above passage, is set out with definition thus:

When you are to set your fingers upon the Strings, you must not grasp the Neck of your Viol, like a Violin; but rather (as those that Play on the Lute) keep your Thumb on the back of the Neck, opposite to your fore-finger; so as your Hand may have liberty to remove up and down, as occasion shall require.⁵

¹ Christopher Simpson, *The Division Viol* (1667), p. 2.

² *Ibid.*, p. 1.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Thomas Robinson, *The Schoole of Musicke* (1603), sig. C ii (verso).

⁵ Simpson, *The Division Viol*, p. 4.

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The carriage of the hand upon the treble viol was, with very slight but important movement in the position of the thumb, the same. Thus Rousseau, upon the *Dessus de Viole*:

la maniere de porter la main est comme celle de la Basse, excepté que le pouce ne doit pas estre placé vis à vis le doigt du milieu mais plustost vis à vis le premier doigt.¹

In the second volume of Ganassi's work, issued in 1543, the many chapters devoted to recondite instruction for the technique of the left hand, serve well to illustrate the close connexion between the finger-boards of the viol and the lute.

It may here be well to dispose, once for all, of that antiquarian fallacy, written by many, that the players of those days had no knowledge of the advanced positions of the left hand; for the twentieth chapter of this same work is devoted to the use of the fingers 'beyond the frets of the extremity of the finger-board'.³ This gives a range of *nearly four octaves* upon the single instrument. Nor is this mere theory, for the names of brilliant executants are held for admiration, as Alphonso da Ferrara, Joanbattista Cicilian, Francesco da Milano, and Rubertino Mantoano. As acquaintance with this most admirable of teachers grows, conviction is borne upon us that had no other man ever set himself to pen a treatise for the viols, our knowledge of that instrument would be complete with this work alone and the elaboration of sixteenth-century performance fully evidenced.

There is a drawing by Raphael, much reproduced, showing how carefully he made study for the *lyra da braccia* player in the great fresco in the Vatican, and in this, the hand is advanced to the third position. Many another pictorial witness

¹ Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la Viole* (1687), p. 72.

² *Regola Rubertina*, Vol. II, 1543, Chaps. VII to XX.

³ ' . . . fuori de li tasti cioe sul corpo del liuto & alla estremita del manico della uiola . . . ' (Sig. G₄ verso).

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ess might be brought forward in support, but the practical omission of Ganassi renders call of further proof needless.

Without forgetting the prior work of Hans Gerle, we may note, contemporary with Ganassi, the instructions of Agricola, for in the much-changed fourth edition of his work, this writer gives useful hints. Noting that the finger must be placed not on, but just behind, the gut frets, he supplies a diagram to emphasize the exact meaning.

Der finger application
Auff dem kragen gantz oben an
Wird nicht alzuweit darunden
Klerlich bey den figurn funden/
Gegen der rechten darneben
Werden dir die zaln solchs geben.¹

Some have complained that Agricola is needlessly given to detailing the obvious, but no one should be blamed for this; for, out of ten things, nine only may be as obvious now as then, and the remaining one, of inestimable value to us. Our condemnation should rather be reserved for the imp of black mischief who inspired him to write his work in jingling couplets, where exigencies of rhyme and scansion cause strange distortions of clarity. Yet he is, like his forerunner Gerding, a human writer and through his work will be seen the man, practical, humorous—tender, even.²

Martin Agricola, *Musica instrumentalis deudsch*, 4th edn. (1545), fol. 35 verso. The long passage on the teaching of children deserves to be much better known. How charming is this unaffected suggestion of the heart-ache of age:

Ach toll war ich jnn der jugent
Das ich nicht betrachte die tugent
Der edlen Musick hübsch und zart
Es ist mein schuld/zu dieser fart

O Jugend Jugend/werstu klug
Für dich man geb nicht goldes gnug
Ja man künd dich bezalen nicht
Drumb knab gedenck an solch geschicht/

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We come again to the seventeenth century:

and in the stopping observe, that when you set any finger down let it not be just upon the Fret, but close to it, bearing it hard down with the end of your finger, and let it rest there, playing the following Notes with your other fingers, until occasion require the moving it; and be sure not to lift your fingers too high, but keep them in an even distance to the Frets, that so they may pass more readily from Fret to Fret.

Also in the Rule of true Fingering, where you skip a Fret there leave a finger;¹

This passage embodies the whole basis of the correct use of the fingers, but the principal reason for leaving down the finger once placed may be added,

This is done . . . also to continue the Sound of a Note when the Bow hath left it.²

The importance of this will be made more apparent when we come to speak of the solo music for the viol. Between Playford and Simpson there is a striking similarity in the wording of their respective sections on the left hand. The following passage has application to all viol playing and is not limited to him who plays divisions.

In any point of Division which reaches to the lower Frets or beyond them; the highest Note thereof is alwayes stopt either with the third, or with the fourth finger: If with the third, the first and second fingers take their orderly places in stopping the

Und brauch wol deiner iungen jar
Es rewet dich nicht/gleub mir furwar. . . .

(*Vorrhede* to the 1545 edition.)

Agricola was well remembered in later years; thus W. C. Printz, in *Historische Beschreibung der Edelen Sing- und Kling-kunst* (Dresden, 1690), Chap. XI, § 1 records his books and adds 'dieses Mannes sonderbahre gute Wissenschaft hervor leuchtet'.

¹ John Playford, *An Introduction to the Skill of Musick* (edn. of 1674), p. 102.

² Christopher Simpson, *The Division Viol* (1667), p. 5.

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two Notes gradually ascending to it, or descending from it. If the highest Note employ the fourth finger, then the next Note under it is stopt either with the third or with the second finger, according to the said Note being flat or sharp: If sharp, with the third; If flat, with the second finger. But whether the highest Note employ the third or fourth finger, the *Third* below doth always employ the first finger, which serves as a Guide to those two Notes above it. And whereas you will see sometimes two successive Notes stopt one after the other with the same finger, it is always done either to prepare the fingers to this posture, or to remove the said posture to some other place. This Order of Fingering holds good throughout the whole Finger-board (in stopping three gradual Notes upon one String) with this difference only, that where the Stops are wide (as among the Frets) the fourth or little finger is of more requisite use than it is lower down where the Stops are more contract.¹

This need for advanced positions of the left hand is well illustrated in some of the divisions for the bass viol engraved at the end of Simpson's book, where several passages are to be played in the second octave on the top string, reaching to *a*".²

For the treble, alto, and tenor viols, the same principles of fingering hold good, noting the different position of the thumb mentioned in the quotation from Rousseau; but in the treble and alto, owing to their shorter neck, each finger serves for two frets, while in the full-sized tenor a combination of the two methods is used.

Ibid., pp. 6 and 7.

For example, Sections 16 and 17 of the beautiful but difficult Divisions beginning upon p. 65.

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§ ii.

At what may have seemed undue length, the practical technique of the viols has now been outlined. The justification for this treatment is to be found in the numbers that are now actively using the instruments and enjoying the vast wealth of music for them bequeathed to us. This playing does not come greatly before the public, for it is, as it was in its heyday three centuries ago, a personal matter wherein music is made for the player's own pleasure. For those who come to the viol anew, these directions may be an indication not only of what requires to be done, but also of the manner of teaching of those past days. To-day, as then, personal instruction is the beginner's requisite, and we may recall the common sense of Couperin, who regarded all harpsichord practice by the beginner as worse than wasted, when away from the master's attention. But when the first foundations of technique have been truly laid, a study of the treatise quoted above will bring a fit reward. The second volume of Ganassi contains many chapters upon the combination of bowing and fingering in difficult and rapid passages, and the elaborations of ornamental treatment are therein developed and the value of Simpson, Mace, and Rousseau can hardly be exaggerated.

As the student advances he will find complexities of technique ever awaiting mastery, double stops, ornaments, and contrapuntal playing. One matter may be referred to here as a final commentary upon the care with which the viols were studied in days to which so many historians have denied a knowledge of or feeling for the instrumental sense.

You must know that sometimes Notes are play'd not on those Strings to which they seem properly to belong; but for ease or better order of Fingering, are play'd upon some other String.¹

¹ Christopher Simpson, *The Division Viol* (1667), p. 4.

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And not only for this reason were they played upon different strings, but in the French composers who worked around the turn of the seventeenth century we find such changes definitely marked for purpose of tone colour and effect; and by them, too, every doubtful bowing is carefully indicated.

CHAPTER X

THE VIOL IN COMMERCE

§ i.

AFTER the didactic austerities of technique, custom would have the reader provided with a lighter chapter dealing with conditions and emoluments of violists and with prices and makers of instruments. Space compels brevity upon a matter in which the student can find ample provision elsewhere, and it will be possible only to give a few curt examples. These may serve to indicate what is available for those who will do the duty of every lover of music and place works like that of Mr. de Lafontaine handy upon their shelves.¹ When prices or payments are mentioned, it should be borne in mind that while the early years of the sixteenth century had a pound worth twelve of ours to-day, depreciation set in so that this high value must be divided by three at the close of the Tudor dynasty, a figure at which the fall was almost checked for many generations.

Transcripts from the old papers bring the players near to us as very real men, as their personal careers are traced through the records, and it would be an easy and a pleasant task to fill a long chapter with such histories. As details become more full in the seventeenth century, we see hints of

¹ J. C. de Lafontaine, *The King's Musick* (n.d., but 1909). The Transcripts selected from the 'Lord Chamberlain's Records' preserved at the Record Office, for the period 1460-1700.

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peculations, law-suits, and domestic difficulties; and many indeed were the players who knew not one most striking passage in the Psalms. With *The King's Musick* should be read the Audit Office Declared Accounts which were reproduced throughout the issues of *The Musical Antiquary*;¹ though in these transcriptions one cannot feel so much confidence as in *The King's Musick*, for there are places wherein the transcriber would seem to have committed the unforgivable sin of modernizing the names of instruments. Thus 'Violins' appears almost uniformly before the names of those who are always 'vialls', 'vyolls', or 'vyalls' in *The King's Musick*, whereas in these early years 'violin' does not occur at all and 'violon' but twice. This 'violon' applied to performers who are elsewhere always 'vialls' is almost certainly a misnomer for 'violone', as it appears first in 1555, when, to say mildly, the true violin can hardly have been officially recognized in England—if, indeed, such an instrument was here at all.²

We may quote the salaries of violists from the *List of all the offices in England, with their fees* of 1593:

Vyalls 8					£	s.	d.
fee to 6 of them apeece	.	.	.	.	30	8	4
one	.	.	.	.	20	0	0
and the other	.	.	.	.	10	5	0

The '6 of them' are second only to the 'Players on the virginalles, 3', each of whom received £50 per annum.³

Prices of instruments do not occur in *The King's Musick* until the seventeenth century is well opened, and then the cost of a bass viol seems to be fairly uniform at between

¹ *The Musical Antiquary*, October, 1909, et seq.

² Those who have had experience of the records of this period will apprehend the difficulties and dangers that beset the transcriber, especially if some contraction suggests the name of an instrument too readily to mind.

³ *The King's Musick*, p. 38.

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eight and ten pounds.¹ A complete set of viols, even earlier in the century, would appear to have cost in like proportion.²

1610	Vyolles twoe greate	xl ^{li}
	Vyolles viz. one sett for the Kinge	xl ^{li}
	One other sett and a base Vyoll for the Prince	xxxii ^{li}

§ ii.

Again, the details of makers are now so ready to hand in any excellent reference books that any selection here would be as needless as it would be invidious. We may just mention the one remaining link with our early school of craftsmen that laid the foundations upon which the Elizabethan makers, Lilles, Pemberton, Strong, Ross, and others, built their splendid work. This is Richard Hume, by some set down for Scotsman for his name and the provenance of the evidence. That he was English is shown by this Edinburgh document of 1535:

Item to the Kingis Grace to Richard Hume, Inglismanne, to mak suld mak violis to the Kingis Grace, to by stufte for the same, xx lib.³

As an example of the craftsman, composer, teacher, executant, and writer, the name of Hans Gerle of Nuremberg stands out as an arresting figure of whom we would gladly know more. His long life spanned almost the entire sixteenth century⁴ and he left sons to carry on his business well into the seventeenth century, e.g., p. 80 (£8, 1632), p. 134 (£10, 1661).

Henry Purse Accounts of Henry Prince of Wales. This item I take from Canon Edwin Blyden (Old English Instruments of Music, p. 90), who can always be relied on to select the most interesting examples in such matters. See also H. W. R. Gray, *Music in the Middle Ages*, p. 233.

1505 to 1599. I do not feel that I have done full justice to Gerle's text; if in this volume he seems overshadowed by others, it is because these works need close acquaintance for full appreciation and the *Musica Teusch* is available only in the fabulously rare original copies.

Dr. Alfred Einstein has conjectured that the shadowy 'Kerlino' may have been an Italian rendering of Gerle: he could not have been this Hans Gerle.

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the next century; another branch of the family had a comparatively temporary house under high patronage in Innsbruck. His father was Konrad Gerle, one of the great Nuremberg makers of the fifteenth century, and therefore coeval with another famous craftsman, Hans Frey, who increased his chance of immortality by marrying his daughter to Albrecht Dürer.

An eighteenth-century authority tells us that 'Hanns Gerle der jüngere' was

a maker of considerable fame in his day, who made viols as well as lutes, in various sizes, all very well proportioned and of a good tone. On both these instruments he was a most refined player.

A cursory glance, claiming no exact accountancy, through the pages of Lütgendorff's excellent list of viol and lute makers,² shows that the names of nearly sixty craftsmen have been preserved whose work was done before the end of the fifteenth century. Consider that, with a very few exceptions, these have been rescued from the muniments of the most important towns, in a few countries; how large a number must there have been of which no record was left or which still remains dormant in unexplored archives. The truth is that a vicious habit of mind with regard to the musical life of the past has led to an entirely false outlook on instrument-making in the early centuries. There is not the slightest reason to suppose that viols, rebecs, lutes, and other instruments made throughout the Middle Ages were at any period 'crude',³ and every practical fragment of evidence shows

¹ J. G. Doppelmayr, *Historische Nachricht Von den Nürnbergischen Mathematick und Künstlern* (Nürnberg, 1730), p. 291.

² Lütgendorff is not free—as who, indeed, could be?—from occasional errors and omissions, but to avoid too varied citation I have taken his work as the most useful to quote.

³ See the quotation given in *The Treatment of Instrumental Music* (p. 30) as an example of the almost incredible absurdities that could be written seriously thirty or forty years ago.

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at, in musical craftsmanship, the three centuries or more preceding 1500 could have been taught nothing by the much hunted years around 1700.

CHAPTER XI

THE SPIRIT: THE MUSIC OF VIOLS

§ i.

THROUGH the Form and the Substance we have seen the Viol as an instrument upon which was lavished the skill of craftsmen and the culture of musicians. Some knowledge will have been gained of its material conception and of the nature and degree of its technique, but there remains the ground for which this art was the necessary groundwork, the concerted music for the family of viols.

It is a difficult matter to convey in words an idea of the true colour of instrumental sound; the best that can be said is that no comparison with the nowadays more familiar tone of the violin should be looked for in the viols. There must be in the laws of physics be some element of similarity in the nature of sounds produced by similar mechanism, but according to means and method the distinction may be great, even between wide-set people within one of the main races of mankind. Compared with the violin, the viol lacked in volume, and in the sulphurous debate staged by Hubert le Blanc, the older instrument attacks its rival with the cry:

Stentor, avec son haleine de Borée.¹

Later, we shall have occasion to see how Thomas Mace, in the seventeenth century, found the power of the violins bringing the acid to his tongue. When we recall that the viol was an instrument designed for domestic use, this lack of volume cannot be recorded in its disfavour; who to-day can say that

¹ *Défense de la basse de Viole* (1740), p. 64.

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he honestly enjoys a trio played in a reasonable drawing-room by a grand pianoforte combining with violin and 'cello that have been selected for their 'fine full tone'? But the viols, with their easy voice and reedy quality, have an infinite capability for every shade of expression. The great asset of the family is its perfect harmony and interlocking suitability of tone throughout all the sizes, a feature of which the importance can hardly be exaggerated for a musical texture of many parts, where each part is of exactly equal musical value. And the free tone of the viol disdains the use either of harmonics or of the mute.

§ ii.

Sir Frederick Fregoso said in the year 1507, with all the authority of one who was to become an archbishop of the Church of Rome,

The musicke with a sette of Violes doth no lesse delite a man for it is verie sweet and artificiall.¹

and by this and many other references to the viols in the *Book of the Courtyer*, we realize that such music was a well-established element in the polite households of the fifteenth century.

Of the nature of this music there is not a great deal to be said, for our knowledge of it is at present all too scanty; one manuscript collection preserved in Florence has given us a few pieces which may with certainty be assigned to a date before 1500. Some fragments of a three-part work by Busnoy are also known in a Munich MS.; what else remains can be

¹ Baldassare Castiglione, *Libro del Cortegiano*, Venice, 1528. I confess to having relied upon the excellent Sir Thomas Hoby for my acquaintance with this inexhaustible storehouse of entertainment. Hoby, whose version first appeared in 1561, must be a safer guide upon such passages than any more modern translator. The original is even more definite as a consort:

E non meno diletta la musica delle quattro viole da arco, la qual è soavissima et artificiosa.

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spoken of only when the many vast collections throughout Europe have been explored with thoroughness and knowledge. Three or four pieces from the Florence MS. are well known to those who have followed Mr. Arnold Dolmetsch's work; one is by Caron, for four viols, two others by Alexander Agricola, for four and three viols respectively, and another by Busnoys, for three viols.¹ These pieces, though austere upon first acquaintance, appear to be founded upon popular melodies which are worked into an ingenious pattern; all have one feature in common, for after the main piece there is a shorter section marked 'Residuum'.

These composers are representative of that Belgian school which had, at the opening of the sixteenth century, so strong an influence upon the music of Italy. And it is indeed hard at this period to come upon the names of truly Italian composers, for many a promising appellation is reducible from an indigenous appearance to a more Northern form. For reasons given in the introductory volume to this series, we do not attempt a history of the music for viols; the subject is too vast and, in our present state of knowledge, too uncertain for its study to find a place in a book, the primary concern of which is to establish the correct use of the instruments. Moreover, there having been an honoured assumption that the music did not exist, historians have not greatly troubled to search for it and only of very recent years have workers in diverse countries begun to examine the enormous accumulations of material. It is too early yet for definitive statements of national progress in this field to be made; yet one thing is being increasingly borne upon us, that at any stage at which it is possible to compare the works of other nations, in the

All three composers died about the turn of the fifteenth century. Two of them appear in active service as Buschne and Caronte in one of the scenes of that curious, yet useful, work by Claud Sebastian, *Bellum Musicale* (Strassburg, 1662), Cap. XXVII (sig. R₄ verso).

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concerted music for the viols the English composers are invariably far in advance of their contemporaries. Again, if the Belgian school is the best known in Europe at the turn of the fifteenth century, its indebtedness to the earlier English workers must not be ignored; and, from what little is known, by their vocal works, of the successors of Dunstable, it is not necessary to credit the Flemings with the beauties of men like Tye and Fairfax.

The absence of instrumental texts¹ has little bearing upon the existence of this class of composition, for the references to it are so many in literature, art, and craftsmanship that it is impossible to imagine that it was not largely practised. It is more the form in which it was cast that is a matter for doubt, and the pieces for viols mentioned above are at least a sign and token of what is lost.

§ iii.

Soon after the first quarter of the sixteenth century, more stable material is ready to hand. Already the lute has a considerable printed literature and books have appeared for the key-boards; the viols in quick turn receive attention. The contents of Judenkünig's book of 1523 for lute and viols are unknown to the writer, but from references it would seem that the plucked instrument receives the greater share of attention. In Agricola's first edition of 1528 there is a fragment for four 'one voice' instruments, and by its place in the book and by its own nature, it is intended for the bowed instruments.² In 1532 Hans Gerle gives us the first printed book devoted to concerted music for bowed instruments, the first portion for the consort viols, the later for the rebecs. To about this same date must be attributed the fine MS. in the

¹ Upon this see *The Treatment of Instrumental Music*, pp. 38 and 39.

² Martin Agricola, *Musica instrumentalis deudsch* (1528), fols. lii verso and liiii (*sic*, for liii) recto.

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British Museum containing pieces for three and four viols by composers like Cornysh, Fardynge, and King Henry VIII.¹ His Majesty was a great musician; the inventory of his truly wonderful collection of instruments has been preserved for us,² and it includes twenty-five viols. His interest in instrumental music is attested in many ways, by the information given of the royal household music,³ and by references in chronicles, as when his great laudator says, even in the second year of his reign (1510-11),

the whole Court remoued to Wyndesore, than begynning hys progresse, exercising hym selfe dayly in shotyng, singyng, daūsing, wrastelyng, casting of the barre, plaiying at the recorders, flute, virginals, and in setting of songes, makying of balettes, and dyd set ii. goodly masses, euery of them fyue partes, whiche were songe oftentymes in hys chapel, and afterwardes in diuers other places.⁴

The King's compositions for the viols (for we persist in seeing no good cause to depart from the ascription in spite of recent efforts to cast a doubt) are rather more simple in structure than some of those associated with them in this manuscript, but they are all full of charm and two or three at least are truly noble in outlook. Those who have been playing them for many years find undimmed pleasure in returning to them after exploring even the greatest works of the early seventeenth century; and than this, perhaps, no harder test could be applied. A piece by Cornyshe in this collection deserves special mention for its instrumental

¹ B.M. MS. Add. 31922.

² B.M. MS. Harl. 1419. Canon Galpin has rendered a service to all by printing this list in full as an Appendix to his *Old English Instruments of Music*.

³ e.g. *The King's Musick, Privy Purse Expenses, Audit Office Declared Accounts*.

⁴ Edwarde Halle, *The Union of the two noble and Illustrate famelies of Lancastre & Yorke*, 1548. B.Bb ii recto. The triumphhaunt reigne of Kyng Henry the VIII, fol. viii (recto). Compare the later account given by Peacham (1622), p. 99.

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treatment. Many remains of this period are anonymous, not only in this volume but in other MS. collections of perhaps the same or slightly later date,¹ where a number of concerted pieces based chiefly upon dance themes and measures are largely unidentified. It would seem that even writers of those days could not always assign an author to the music before them; with several of the musical illustrations in text-books of the period we find such a title as

Aliud Exemplum, Incerto Authore,²

These collections of pieces may be taken by way of signposts pointing the directions in which such composition was to develop in the second half of the century. The earlier manuscript shows, as do also the pieces by Busnoys, Caron, and Agricola, the beginnings of the untrammelled form, later to be known so descriptively as the Fancy, while in the other collections there is that definite alliance of music to a rigid metrical formula that was to be so fully explored when the Pavans, Galliards, Corantos, and their fellow dances had ceased an active life. By the contrasted combinations of these measures there came about those suites which, in their turn, led to the familiar sonata form of the so-called classical period. To these dances may be attributed almost the only French music for viols printed in the sixteenth century, the collection of Basse Dances published by Pierre Attaignant in 1530.

In Italy about this period there are two books of quite extraordinary interest in viol music: one is the *Regola Rubertina* of Ganassi from which so much already has been taken, the other the work of one Diego Ortiz, a Spaniard, but issued in Rome.³ Ganassi gives music as well as tuition,

¹ For example, B.M. MS. Royal Appendix 74-6.

² Gregorio Fabro, *Musices practicae erotematum Libri II*, Basle, 1553, p. 214.

³ *Trattado de Glosas sobre Clausulas y otros generos de puntos en la Musica de Violones*, Rome (1553).

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but as his examples are concerned with the solo instrument, reference will be postponed to the next section. Ortiz is also largely concerned with solo work, but he gives examples of, and practical hints for playing, concerted pieces; these are based on madrigals and are of profound interest. Ortiz we shall meet later.¹ Before leaving the Italians, mention must be made of a work by that latinized Fleming, Nicolo Gomberti, to whom Ganassi has already introduced us: *Gomberti Excellentissimi, et inventione in hac arte facile principis . . . musica quatuor vocum (vulgo Motecta nuncupatur), lyris maioribus, ac tibiis imparibus accomodata. Venetiis apud Ant. Gardanum (1539?)*. Whether this is really, as its title might imply, a set of motets for the *archiviole da lyra* and recorders, the writer cannot say, for to his great regret he knows the work by reference only; it must, in any case, be one of the earliest printed books for the strings and wood wind combined.²

In Spain, which may indeed some day be discovered to be the cradle of the viols and their music, the early manuscripts are yet *terra incognita*; what their full and enlightened exploration will reveal none at present may say. The attention of the early printers was devoted to those compositions for the plucked *vihuela*,³ so akin to the lute, in which is indicated a degree of technique both of composition and of playing, unparalleled until the rise of our Elizabethan school,

¹ Ortiz is available in the excellent reprint edited by Dr. Max Schneider in 1913. Although the music is given in modern notation with certain amendments, the editor has noted every departure from, or addition to, the original. The text is for the most part in facsimile.

² The British Museum unfortunately possesses only the *Cantus* voice part of this work, in the edition of 1541. The motets have the characteristic *Residuum* of the fifteenth-century Flemish composers. The large 'lyras' and the 'unequal' or 'mixed' (?) flutes suggest viols and recorders, but 'lyra' may mean a lyra da gamba, or even a bass lute.

³ *Los seys libros del Delphin*, of Luys de Narbaez (Valladolid, 1538), contain within themselves music that might establish a nation's reputation.

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which culminated in John Dowland, beside whom all other writers for the lute must suffer some degree of eclipse. Nevertheless, in those technical treatises wherein the plucked form only is studied, there are passing references to the vihuela da arco as an instrument of general use.¹

In 1565 there appeared a work upon the playing of fantasies wherein the concerted music for the vihuelas is exemplified by some particularly interesting pieces;² this book deals largely with the keyboard, but it contains also much valuable information upon our instruments and the technique of their use in the consort. Shortly after Fray Thomas there came the well-known volume of the works of the blind organist, Antonio de Cabeçon, which was prepared for the press as an act of filial affection by his son, Hernando de Cabeçon; from the title-page it will be seen that they are intended for the keyboard, the harp or the viols, for the vihuela here is obviously the bowed form.³ The music is printed in a curious notation wherein figures are used for notes, usually regarded simply as an instrumental tablature. It is not the invention of Hernando, for some years previously there had appeared a work employing this notation and from its title it may be conjectured to contain similarly concerted music for viols; but the reference made to it here is at second hand only.⁴ This system may be viewed from a different angle; as a means of printing concerted music of many parts

¹ For example, a passage on folio ciii (verso) in Bermudo's *Declaraciõ* (1555), which, however, almost defies translation.

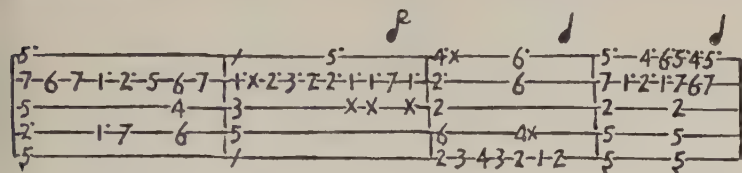
² Fray Thomas de Sancta Maria, *Arte de tañer Fantasia, assi para Tecla como para Vihuela, y todo instrumêto, en que se pudiere tañer a tres, y a quatro voces, y a mas*, Valladolid (1565).

³ Antonio de Cabeçon, *Obras de musica para tecla arpa y vihuela . . . recopiladas y puestas en cifra por Hernando de Cabeçon, suo hijo*, Madrid (1578). A copy of this very rare book has been in the British Museum for many years, but I have not been able to find it recorded in any catalogue there: it may therefore be useful to quote the press mark: k. 8. e. 10.

⁴ Vinegas de Hinestrosa, *Libro de cifra nueva para tecla harpa y vihuela*, Alcalá

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it has a simplicity and an economy of space that are alike remarkable.



Antonio de Cabeçon, 1578

fol. 150 (verso)

The book of Cabeçon has been widely accepted as organ music and much of it has been transcribed into modern notation for that instrument. Many of these pieces are, however, unplayable upon any keyboard instrument, and they are equally unsuited to the harp. But for the consort viols they are one and all not only possible but most eminently suited, whether it be those in two or those in six parts. The standard of the pieces varies within wide limits from unsophisticated airs to full contrapuntal and fugal treatment with many rapid passages of real instrumental writing. There is much use made of the themes of others, Josquin, Verdelot, Adrian; and some of the settings are by the younger Cabeçon. It is a book of great interest to us to-day, and the pieces that have been played have been found richly satisfying.

In the hundred years following Cabeçon there must be much music for viols in Spain, but the writer has to confess to knowing only a very few scattered pieces. We hear of a Spanish Don anxiously inquiring of Sir Peter Lely for missing parts of a Jenkins fantasy à 3,¹ and other references show that

(1557). Let further investigation of this work not be impeded by the assumption of some historians that it is designed for the lute.

The use of numerical symbols for notes is a candle around which the inventive moths for centuries have fluttered, as well for vocal as for instrumental music.
¹ Roger North, *The Muscicall Gramarian* (B.M. Add. MS. 32533); Miss Hilda Andrews' edition (1925), p. 22.

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concerted music for viols was a resource of the intellect until near the end of the seventeenth century.

In Italy around the turn of the sixteenth century fortune has favoured us a little better, for there are not a few manuscripts of transalpine consorts in our English museums.¹ In the vast British Museum and Oxford collections there are many such, but often unidentified; several seem to bear the stamp of transcribed madrigals, of which some are to be assigned with certainty to composers like Marenzio, Vecchi and Pallavicino. We have, though, a certain number of pieces definitely instrumental in character, but most often of dance form, such as the Galliards for five viols by Trabaci, to be dated about 1615. Perhaps some of the most advanced work in this field done in Italy is contemporary with the highest development of our English school at the end of the first quarter of the seventeenth century, and we know from Thomas Mace's *Musick's Monument* that the consorts for viols by Monteverde were highly regarded in England. But the attention of the Italians was then already being turned to the violin by composers like Allegri, and in the discovery of its facile appeal the graver instruments were neglected.

§ iv.

Of French viol music before the middle of the seventeenth century our information is even more meagre than of the Italian and Spanish. From the great attention given to the viols by Mersenne in 1636 it is obvious that they must have been widely used, though it is noteworthy that to illustrate their use he must give an English six-part fantasy.

In the early seventeenth century we know only the work of isolated composers such as the fine consorts of du Cauro

¹ There must be a great quantity of Italian music of this period awaiting recovery; see, for example, the picture of musical life at the court of Ferrara given in Gray and Heseltine's serio-flippant study of Carlo Gesualdo (1926).

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Perhaps it is significant that André Maugars came to England to study the viol. An entry in the Lord Chamberlain's records for 1625 tells that he attended as one of

the Queen's servants who came over with her,¹

but this was his second visit, as he had previously been in King James I's band. To Maugars and to Hottam, Rousseau gives the credit of being the first men who excelled in viol playing in France.² Maugars travelled in Italy and rendered to posterity the invaluable service of describing what he saw;³ his accounts have an almost dreamlike atmosphere, as though one were in the midst of some scene in a crowded Veronese composition. Two characteristic passages are translated in Mr. Dolmetsch's book and should be read by all who would hear what an ensemble of music could be.⁴ While Maugars's own playing on the viol aroused admiration in Rome, he did not find there any native performers of great powers;⁵ he had learned from his English masters the whole art, and Rousseau tells us that he was remarkable for his ability to extemporize

¹ *The King's Musick*, p. 59.

² *Traité de la Viole*, p. 23.

³ *Response faite à un Curieux sur le Sentiment de la Musique d'Italie, écrite à Rome le premier Octobre 1639*, 8vo, 32 pages, without date, printer, or place, but probably printed in Rome and not Paris (as often assumed) and at the end of 1639 or early 1640.

The text of this most valuable 'letter' has been printed in full as an appendix to Monsieur E. Thoinan's excellent monograph on Maugars (Paris, 1865). The violist's abilities were extended to translating Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* and to cultivating a pretty wit as a courtier to Richelieu. There is a delightful story told by Tallemant des Réaux in his *Historiettes* (edn. of 1834, Tom. II, p. 119) of Maugars's description of 'la plus belle relique du monde', which he has seen at Notre Dame du Puys, and of the embarrassment caused by a young lady who wanted to know what it was.

Monsieur Thoinan's references to the viols and their technique are quite sound and he is singularly free from the absurdities common to 'students' of his day; but he has fallen into a trap of translation in page 3, in making Coperario's 'Fancies (i.e. for viols) to the organ' appear as 'fantasies pour l'orgue'.

⁴ *The Interpretation of the Music of the 17th and 18th Centuries*, pp. 465 et seq.

⁵ The same thing seems to have happened shortly after to Sir John Bolles. See *infra*, p. 122.

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'an infinity of divisions' on an impromptu subject. Hottman, Rousseau awards the laurels for having been the first in France to compose

... des Pièces d'Harmonie réglées sur la Viole. . . . La tendresse de son Jeu venoit de ces beaux coups d'Archet qu'il animoit, qu'il adoucissoit avec tout d'adresse & si à propos, qu'il charmoit tous ceux qui l'entendoient, & c'est ce qui a commencé à donner la perfection à la Viole, & à la faire estimer preferablement à tous les autres Instruments.¹

In these passages and especially in what follows in Rousseau it will be seen that the tendency of this belated study of the viol was to turn the attention more to those solo possibilities in which they were soon to do such fine things. Yfrahel from the care with which both Mersenne and Rousseau describe the tunings of the relative voices of the consort, it is necessary to consider that the instruments were as commonly used in that way in France as elsewhere, and a few consort usually upon dance formulae, are known.²

Germany, of all countries, presents us with least information about a period when her activities must have been great. When Praetorius wrote his great work,³ to be published so near to his death, the portions on the consort viols indicate clearly that their use was an everyday matter, and also that combined instrumental music, in which they figured, was also largely practised. In no country in Europe was the purely contrapuntal tradition so faithfully preserved and developed in after years, and there is every reason to believe that somewhere there lie considerable quantities of concerto music for viols of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth

¹ *Traité de la Viole* (1687), p. 23. The 'pièces d'Harmonie réglées sur la Viole' means, of course, music in full harmony for the solo instrument; in England this was known as using the viol 'lyra way'.

² For example, *Allemande Grave* in D minor for three viols to the organ, by Henry Dumont, 1657.

³ *Syntagma Musicum*, Parts II and III, 1618/9.

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centuries. Dr. Riemann once printed a few examples, some of which have that completely instrumental appearance of the English work of the period; unfortunately he gave no clue to the sources from which his information was obtained. The full exploration of German remains in this field is a work that will doubtless soon be undertaken and we must wait its results before more definite statements can be made. It is safe to say, however, that after the middle of the seventeenth century the smaller viols began to be neglected, for they find no place in the considerable literature on the bowed instruments that is available to us.¹

Of other countries, ignorance compels the writer to be silent, expressing only the suspicion that if the musical past of Poland were fully brought to light (if, indeed, there be any relevant records left), its sixteenth century might provide some startling material.²

There are large collections, of MSS. and printed books, of viol music in the Staatsbibliothek at Berlin, the Landesbibliothek at Darmstadt, and other German libraries, but a cursory glance at the contents of some of these suggests that they consist largely of late seventeenth- and of eighteenth-century material. The interest in early instrumental music now rapidly spreading in Germany would lead to a systematic examination of buried material in the near future. Dr. Alfred Einstein's book on the German Viola da Gamba literature (1905) deals almost entirely with the later seventeenth-century work, which was not consort writing in any sense.

More will be said upon this country later. Let a record be made here of appreciation of that very beautiful monograph, *La Musique Polonaise*, par J. Opieski, en collaboration avec G. Koeckert, Paris, 1918.

CHAPTER XII

THE GOLDEN AGE IN ENGLAND

§ i.

THE story of the music of viols in England proceeds to the early Elizabethan days when composers like Tye, Johnson, Shepherd, Parsons, Mundy, and White¹ set their work largely by that ancient form known as the *In Nomine*. From that time onwards our material is vastly rich and it is possible to speak with some confidence upon the broader aspects of development. Although this last great phase spans less than a century, its full history might, with barest justice, fill a large volume; and much research is yet required before that can be attempted. The problem of its treatment here is that either too much or too little will be said, and the latter course is the one which the writer finds himself compelled, not without reluctance, to take. An excuse for what may seem omission of the most important part of our study will be found in the issue of another work, in which practical experience will endeavour to indicate a framework of the instrumental music of this period.²

Hence we shall have here to give but a passing reference to those familiar yet so valuable passages in Morley, Simpson and Mace,³ wherein we find the structure of the various forms detailed, the composers mentioned, and the instrumental treatment described. Those lines from *Musick's Monument*, oft quoted but always welcome, upon the spiritual

¹ See, for example, B.M. Add. MS. 31390.

² *Tudor Instrumental Music and its Developments. A Survey of Instrumental Music in England from 1500 to 1650.* To be published by the Oxford University Press (The World's Manuals). In preparation (1930).

³ Thomas Morley, *A Plaine and easie introduction to practicall musicke*, 1597, Part III.

Christopher Simpson, *A Compendium of Practical Musick*, 1667, Part IV, p. 111.
Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument*, 1676, Part III, Chap. I, p. 234.

THE GOLDEN AGE

effect found by Mace and his friends in the playing of consorts, are alone a justification of the music's existence; and it must stand as one of the marvels of the world that for generations musicians should have read and quoted them without being moved to know more of the music that had inspired them. Increasing understanding to-day is bringing with it a touch of humility, instead of arrogance.

§ ii.

There is difficulty in assigning precedence to composers in the latter part of Elizabeth's reign, for the works survive either in undated part-books or in manuscript collections, the contents of which are obviously not immediately contemporary. Those published Madrigals, 'apt for viols or voices', are but a passing fashion at a time when the purely instrumental compositions were for the most part confined to manuscript. A few works for viols found their way into print before the close of the sixteenth century, Morley's book of pieces for two viols being an example wherein fine instrumental sense and construction may be seen. The fantasy had been fully developed and the more rigid possibilities of the Pavan, the Galliard, and other dance measures had been completely assimilated into the domain of pure music. The 'programme' piece had not been neglected, though principally it is found in music for the lyra-viol or the virginals; an anonymous fantasy for five viols exists bearing the title *The Funeralls*, in which not much effort is required to see the portège and interment and perhaps a suggestion of cakes and ale upon the return.¹ One would be inclined to date this rather gruesome piece about 1580 or even earlier; but for the most part the consort viols disdained the concrete for those deeper things that are not to be told in words.

B.M. Add. MSS. 17792-17796. Perhaps this is one of those works which Mr. R. O. Morris would assign to Nicholas Bugworthy.

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One of the most striking facts, to be realized only after a long battle with the preconceptions of a lifetime, is the comparative absence from this field of some of those composers whose names we have been taught to regard as the greatest in our Golden Age of Music. And even here dogmatism must be avoided, since none may predict what further investigation of the plethora of unexplored manuscripts may not bring to light.

Both Simpson and Mace have left for us a list of composers, and despite the saving clauses, 'divers other excellent men' and 'very many others', it is not too hard a stretching to say that these must represent the works which had impressed them most; for, remember, these two writers were, of all men, the best qualified to speak of the very period with which we are dealing.

A combination of these lists (which are, indeed, very similar) gives the following when arranged alphabetically:

Coleman, Coperario, Deering, Alphonso Ferrabosco, Jenkins, William Lawes, Lock, Lupo, Mico, Simpson, Ward, and White.¹

Simpson naturally comes from Mace's list, and that writer also mentions 'one Monteverde, a Famous Italian Author'. This last is the only foreigner given; for the uninitiated, it should be explained that Alphonso Ferrabosco was born at Greenwich and passed all his days in England, while Giovanni Coperario spent his earlier years as plain John Cooper, changing the form of his name after a sojourn in Italy. One of the sorrows of the modern student of the viol is the apparently complete loss of Monteverde's consorts. It was no insular prejudice that reserved mention almost entirely for Englishmen, for Simpson, at the end of his passage mentioned above, expressed our present view when he said:

¹ It may be noted that the names of the most famous composers are those of the great players of the day: the same is true of the French school. The two functions had not yet become divorced.

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You need not seek Outlandish Authors, especially for Instrumental Musick; no Nation (in my opinion) being equal to the *English* in that way; as well for their excellent, as their various and numerous Consorts of 3, 4, 5, and 6 Parts made properly for Instruments; of all which (as I said) *Fancies* are the Chief.

In the period with which we deal, three names at least will be familiar to the most cursory reader of standard musical history—those of John Bull, William Byrd, and Orlando Gibbons; and the absence of all three from the lists given by both Mace and Simpson cannot escape remark. Of Dr. Bull, 'that prodigy of a man', it may be said at once that no record of any compositions for viols has been found even by those who have devoted many years to search for all the remains of his output.¹ William Byrd has left us three or four works and our path would have been easier if he had not done so; for honesty compels a confession that they do not rank near to the same order as his ecclesiastical compositions or his madrigals, in which he seems so invariably to come out with the most perfect adaptation of music to the spirit of his subject, be it light or solemn. Besides the two well-known six-part fantasies for viols, there is a *Preludium and Fantasy* for five viols, the scoring of the parts of which has only been accomplished after a great labour.² The date of these works is speculative, for they are found in collections with others by composers associated with the turn of the sixteenth century.

Some writers have assumed for the six-part fantasies an early date and have attributed to Byrd a great position as a pioneer in viol music; others, immersed in Byrd's vocal work, have made somewhat hasty claim that his string music must

¹ Here a word of recognition must be given for the researches of Miss Margaret H. Glyn.

² While the Prelude follows normal lines, the so-called Fantasy seems like an attempt at a musical joke; at all events, I see no other explanation of the Bass part.

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be of equal calibre. The present writer must record his strong objections to both views; there seems no evidence for assigning any very early date to these works and that would be the only claim they could have to distinction. For, compared to the best of the other work being done at the end of Elizabeth's reign, they are distinctly inferior in thematic conception, in construction, and in instrumental sense. They are pleasant to play and to hear, but the individual parts, like the general effect, are quite without that sense of dignity and confidence for which the experienced student of the viol consort looks in this period. Of the *Fantasies of Orlando Gibbons*, an opinion (perhaps a little exaggerated) has already been expressed in the preceding volume.¹

Yet this list is also silent about names of some whose work must be placed beside the best of those mentioned: Michael Easte, Simon Ives, Thomas Tomkins, Thomas Weelkes, and one Leetherland of whom we know little, but that little good.² The fame of Dowland for the lute, well noticed by Mace upon an earlier page of his book, may have inhibited the memory of his fewer compositions for viols; as with everything to which he set his master hand, his consorts rank with the highest. For Martin Pierson, perhaps silence was the kindest treatment.

In so large and varied a body of music, discrimination is especially necessary if the true worth of this whole school is to receive the recognition due to it; the worst enemy is the sentimentalist who will admire anything because of antiquity. Yet the general level will be found to be as high as it was in the songs and madrigals of the period. To-day we are hardly past the dawn twilight of recovery and the more minute details of praise and of blame are not yet ours to give.

¹ *The Treatment of Instrumental Music*, p. 36.

² Only a six-part Pavan is known to the writer; it is a remarkably fine work. (B.M. Add. MSS. 17786-17791.)

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The generation trained under the hands of Ferrabosco, Coperario, and their fellows preserved to the full the tradition in which it was reared, yet it was no mere follower but a legitimate heir using its patrimony to the fullest advantage. There is a real development, but nothing to be thought of in terms of either 'improvement' or 'decline'; rather, perhaps, a broadening and humanizing of the outlook. This is, however, a deep matter of history, the discussion of which is impossible here, and the slight changes in construction and rhythm must be left to another work. Let us hear Thomas Mace upon this last phase of our great national school, when it had just suffered sudden eclipse in the full brilliance of its meridian :

These last Ages have produc'd very many Able, and most Excellent Masters in Musick; Three only (of which) I will Instance in, in This Particular; because They were as Voluminous, and very Eminent in Their Works, viz. Mr. William Lawes, Mr. John Jenkins, and Mr. Christopher Simpson.

These Three Famous Men, although Two of Them be laid asleep (or as we say, Dead;) yet by Their most Singular and Rare Works, They Live; and may so easily be Distinguished, the one from the other, and as Exactly known, which is which, as if they were present in person, and should speak Words.¹

In this beautiful epitaph, anticipating by two centuries a recent philosopher, there is a microcosm of his book, which itself forms a fitting epitaph to a whole age of music. To his three names, one other should be added, that of Matthew Lock, who has been sometimes called the last of the old school, but who might with equal justice be called the first of the newer school, for the spirit of change and experiment in his work foreshadowed much of what was to come. His personality, like his portrait in the Oxford Music Room, does

¹ Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument* (1676), p. 151. Is not this indeed Samuel Butler's 'Vicarious Existence'?

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not attract us; however much the youthful Thomas Salmon needed squashing, Lock's controversial methods did not add dignity to his reputation.¹

Among men who reached so high a standard it would be invidious to single out one as 'the greatest'. Yet it can be said, without injustice, that in the whole of English music John Jenkins stands out as the most arresting figure, for the quality and variety of his vast output and for the honour of his long life. No work has ever been composed too fine for that of Jenkins to stand beside it; and no musician has ever won greater affection and respect from all with whom he had contact. It is not here in place to say more; but a plea may be made that musical writers would turn their attention to an Englishman who has claims as strong as the best of those foreign heroes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries upon whom so much study has been lavished.

Of Simpson more will be said in a later chapter, and a word on William Lawes, the elder half-brother of the better-remembered Henry, must close this brief account. We know from Fuller's *Worthies of England* the vast respect in which he was held, how the King called him 'The Father of Musick' (though he was not so very old) and of his death at the siege of Chester. In a touching tribute made by his brother Henry there is a sentence of great significance:

Neither was there any Instrument then in use, but he compos'd to it so aptly, as if he had only studied that.²

¹ See the vituperation in *Observations upon A Late Book, entituled An Essay to the Advancement of musick* (1672) and *The present Practice of Musick vindicated* (1673). Salmon lost his major case, but time has settled most of the lesser points in his favour. However, Salmon was a musical heretic in the strictest sense, and a considerable licence of language has always been allowed when dealing with heretics. Those who canonized Bernard of Clairvaux must have turned a blind eye upon that spiritual dictator's descriptions of Abélard and Arnold of Brescia.

² *Choice Psalms put into Musick, For Three Voices . . . , with a Thorough Bass. Compos'd by William and Henry Lawes, Brothers.* (Four Parts.) 1648.

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In his part writing, William Lawes is the most complex of all these composers.

In all the consorts of viols the equality of parts is an essential factor. Even in the old age of Thomas Mace a warning had become necessary, owing to the increasing prestige of the violin. It is not out of place to-day:

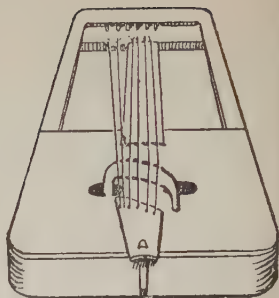
‘What is the *Musick of Parts Compos’d for, if not to be Heard?*

And *These Things were Performed*, upon so many *Equal, and Truly-Sciz’d Viols*; and so *Exactly Strung, Tun’d, and Play’d upon*, as no one *Part* was any *Impediment* to the *Other*; but still (as the *Composition* required) by *Intervals*, each *Part Amplified*, and *Heightned the Other*; *The Organ Evenly, Softly, and Sweetly Acchording to All*.¹

¹ Thomas Mace, *Musick’s Monument* (1676), pp. 233 and 234.



Rebec



Crwth



*Head of a French
treble viol.*



*Head of a
bass viol by
Nicolas Kolbe.
1702*

PART II
THE VIOL AS A SOLO INSTRUMENT
CHAPTER I
THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOLO WRITING

§ i.

IF the viols found the highest expression of their music in the pure consort, it must be conceded that in their single use they generated a mass of composition which for wealth and variety can be paralleled only in the music of the lute. Their use for the playing of airs and for the accompaniment of song or speech must indeed go back to the very dawn of the instrument itself, but we are concerned here with what is known of the usage with the style of music that is nearer to us.

The solo use of the members of the viol family may be considered in three main divisions, notwithstanding that Jean Rousseau would add two to this number.¹ First there must be some brief account of the developments of the music for the standard viol, in both the bass and the treble voices, in those countries where late interest or changing fashion inhibited the use of the consort proper. Secondly, there is the special usage of the bass viol in what became the most intellectual type of solo music in the seventeenth century, the 'Divisions on a Ground'. And, thirdly, the particular treatment of the small bass viol with regard to tunings adapted to assist the performance of contrapuntal music, after the manner of the lute, upon the single instrument.

To these, Rousseau would add the use of the bass viol for self-accompaniment for the voice and also for playing 'the

¹ *Traité de la Viole* (1687), p. 55.

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bass' in general concerted music of mixed instruments; and on both these aspects it will be necessary briefly to touch. Except for the Division Viol, it will be found that no very distinct lines of demarcation can be made between the various types of musical use of the solo viol; yet in a very broad sense certain definite characteristics make themselves felt, especially in the English use of the Viol *lyra*-way, or with variable tunings.

§ ii.

The fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century use of the viol to support the voice is so well evidenced in the art of the times that further demonstration is needless. Of the more remote times enough is now known to justify the statement that the instrumental part was an extempore art, not of mere support but one that moved according to exact rules by which the player performed complex 'divisions' upon the melody.

There is an important passage in Tinctoris which, besides implying that close relationship of viol and lute mentioned before, suggests that the viol, when accompanying songs, was an elaborate factor in the performance:

Although in Italy and Spain the *lyra* (*sive leutum*) is usually played without the bow, yet for the accompaniment and decoration of songs and ballads, it is used with the bow by the masters.¹

A definite example of the viol used with the voice occurs in Ganassi's second volume, with the customary practical details of this side of the technique. It is a madrigal, not yet identified, arranged for the voice to sing one part and for two other parts to be played upon the instrument. This method of self-accompaniment had been vigorously explored in his day, he tells us, and he mentions two 'notable men' who excelled in

¹ Johannes Tinctoris, *De inventione et usu musicae* (Naples, Francesco del Tупpo, c. 1488). I have taken this passage from Dr. Johannes Wolf's *Notationskunde*, Vol. II, p. 224.

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t, Messer Juliano Tiburtino and Messer Lodovico Lasagnino of Florence. He compares this use of the viol with the playing of the 'Lyra de sette corde' (the lyra da braccia), and notes the difference in treatment that is necessitated by the many differences in the two instruments.¹

Thus, when we come to our great Elizabethan school of song-writers, whose full accompaniments are so integral a part of the whole effect, it is with knowledge that they were not setting the crown upon a practice that had been developing throughout the century, if not from still earlier days. This is a matter that cannot here be pursued much further, for there is a vast vocal literature with 'accompaniment' for viol, or 'lute or viol', in all countries for the next century and a half. But this should be noted: that when the fine full polyphonic work, given to the instrument by the Elizabethans, passed away and was replaced by the emasculated-looking 'figured-bass', yet there are many examples of these simple bass parts, worked out, which show that the extemporary player of the seventeenth century was expected to supply the voice with a well-constructed support of moving parts; for the true 'accompaniment' of plain chords made headway but slowly in England, so opposed was it to the whole tradition of our music.

The bass viol is a most pleasing instrument to sing to, and, although its harmonic music makes big demands for self-accompaniment, this art has lately been revived with excellent effect for songs of the period. Frequently we find settings of songs with a full consort in support, and it should be noted that the singer in those days was ever one of the players. The accompaniment had not then been thrust into the

¹ Silvestro Ganassi, *Regola Rubertina*, Vol. II, 1543, Cap. XVI. The madrigal is entitled *Io vorei Dio d'amor* and has been often played and sung at Mr. Dolmetsch's concerts. Dr. Max Schneider suggests that it may be by Jacobus Oglianus.

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background; but neither had it usurped the rightful place of the singer, as in a later school.

If many famous 'Books of Ayres' bear witness to the popularity of the viol for the support of the voice, references in contemporary literature may be quoted to show that the singer and player were one. One example will suffice, and it may be selected from an obscure work by the writer's favourite scoundrel in the Elizabethan Grub Street. To borrow from Webster's verse, 'Now Palmerin, in his owne language singes':

Dinner beeing ended, a fayre Violl *da gamba* was brought her, whereon the Lady so rarely and cunninglie playd, and sung thereto with a voyce so sweet and heauenlie, that *Primalcon*,¹ though his thoughts forbad him to affect her, oft would hee urge her to play some lessons twise or thrise ouer, and to sing againe diuers of her ditties, especially these two following, wherein he very much delighted.

¶The first Dittie of *Laurea*, daughter to *Garnides*, sweetlie sung to her Violl *de gamba*, in the presence of the Knight of Fortune.

For old Anthony's sake the verses shall lie unjudged in the book itself, for his lyric muse was all too often as obdurate as the lady of whom his second dittie sings.²

§ iii.

Here we may mention the employment of the viol in what was known as 'the broken consort', both for purely instrumental music and also in association with the voice. The

¹ The second of that name and grandson to the valiant but quick-tempered Primaleon, whose father was Palmerin D'Oliva.

² *The Third and last Part of Palmerin of England*, translated by A[nthony] M[unday], (London, 1602), fol. 119. Of this, the only edition, but four (or possibly five) copies survive, and of these one at least is imperfect. When Munday does touch a higher note, as in the beautiful Canzonet, *Beauty sate bathing by a Spring*, in *The Second Booke of Primaleon of Greece*, it is taken for granted that he must have stolen it.

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term broken music meant the combination of instruments of different families and is familiar by many Shakespearian allusions.

Pandarus. Fair prince, here is good broken music.

Paris. You have broke it, cousin; and, by my life, you shall make it whole again.¹

Not much of such music found its way into print, and the most notable early example exists only in widely scattered unique copies of some of its parts.

*The first booke of Consort Lessons, made by diuers exquisite Authors, for six Instruments to play together, the Treble Lute, the Pandora, the Cittern (sic), the Base-violl, the Flute & Treble-Violl. Newly set forth at the coast & charges of a Gentle-man, for his priuate pleasure, and for diuers others his frendes which delight in Musicke.*²

The use of the term with some observations upon this type of music is found in Bacon:

And so (likewise) in that *Musick*, which we call *Broken Musick*, or *Consort Musick*; Some *Consorts of Instruments* are sweeter than others; (A Thing not sufficiently yet observed:) As the *Irish Harp*, and *Base Viall* agree well: The *Recorder* and *Stringed Musick* agree well: *Organs* and the *Voice* agree well, &c. But the *Virginalls* and the *Lute*; Or the *Welch-Harp*; and the *Irish-Harp*; Or the *Voice* and *Pipes* alone, agree not so well; But for the *Melioration of Musick* there is yet much left (in this Point of *Exquisite Consorts*) to try and enquire.³

The use of the word 'Consort' as equivalent to 'Broken' is rather at variance with the apparent custom of the period, wherein 'Consort' is usually associated with instruments of the same family. Thus as late as 1672 we find Matthew Lock's *Compositions for Broken and Whole Consorts*; and in the Lord

Troilus and Cressida, Act III, Scene i.

Usually known as Morley's Consort Lessons. Printed by Barley in 1599. One part is in the British Museum; others in the Bodleian and Christ Church, Oxford.

³ *Sylva Sylvarum*, Century III, No. 278.

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Chamberlain's Records there are several entries using this term.

1660. June 16.

Davis Mell, a violin, his own place and in Woodington place, for the broken consort also.¹

Yet, contemporary with Bacon, there is some evidence from Praetorius that the name 'English Consort' was held to be synonymous with broken consort in other countries. But first he uses it for any grouping of instruments.

Die Engelländer nennens gar *opposite a consortio* ein *Consort*, Welche etliche Personen mit allerley *Instrumenten*, als Clavicymbal oder Grossspinnet, gross-Lyra, Doppelharff, Lautten, Theorben, Bassdorn, Penorcon, Zittern, *Viol de Gamba*, einer kleinen Discorde, Geig, einer Querflöit oder Blockflöit, bissweilen auch einer stillen Posaun oder Racket zusammen in einer *Compagny* unnd Gesellschafft gar still, sanfft und lieblich *accordiren*, und in anmutiger *Symphonia* mit einander zusammen stimmen.²

But elsewhere in this remarkable volume, the merits of which as a fount of origin of orchestration have not received the recognition, there is an example given, where 'English Consort' obviously means a broken consort.

Welcher *Chor* droben *fol. 5* ein *Englisch Consort* ist generall worden, und wegen anrührung der vielen Saiten gar ein schön *effectum* machet, und herrlichen lieblichen *Resonantz* von sich gienget. Inmassen ich denn einssmahls die herrliche aus der massen schönen *Motetam* des trefflichen *Componisten Jaches de Villiers Egressus Jesus, à 7. vocum*, mit 2. Theorben, 3. Lauten, 2. Citharen, 4. Clavicymbeln und Spinetten, 7. *Violen de Gamba*, 2. Quer-Flöiten, 2. Knaben, 1. *Altisten* und einer grossen *Violen* (Bass-Geig) oder Orgel oder *Regal musiciren* lassen. . . .³

¹ *The King's Musick*, p. 114.

² Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, Tom. III (1619), p. 5. My faith in the authorities was much shaken when I found the whole sense of this passage perverted by a well-known writer, who gave 'opposite' as the translation of *opposite*.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

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The grouping of instruments of unlike nature had, however, been well explored in the sixteenth century, especially in relation to the music for masques and plays. In this field of scholarship it may be well to suggest here that the reproduction of a list of all the instruments used in some intermedia is of little value to the student to-day. Our need is for knowledge of the selective groupings that were used in the individual scenes. Such details were preserved in several cases and for an excellent example the reader may refer to Striggio and Corteccia's *Psyche and Amor*.¹

To give a simple list of composers and works for what may be termed the 'standard' viol during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries would take up many pages and would then be but a duplication of information that can be found elsewhere.² It must suffice here to say that the viola da gamba sonatas of Bach were but the culmination of an art-form that had been well developed in Germany in the seventeenth century.³ And a glance at the Dutch paintings of that period will show how intimately the viol was associated with the domestic life of the Netherlands.

Attention here will be confined to a brief note upon the remarkable school of composers for the viols which grew up so rapidly in France upon the foundations laid by Maugars, Hottman, and St. Colombe. It is a school with a strong individuality and it is unique in that it developed vigorously at a time when the violin was sweeping Europe; yet its masters preserved a far greater nationality than did those of the newer instrument, of which the bitter rivalry is reflected

¹ *Descrizione dell' Apparato della Commedia ed Intermedia d'essa, fatta in Firenze il Giorno di S. Stefano l'anno 1565*. (Edition of 1566, after Kiesewetter.) Dr. O. G. Sonneck has published the entire text of the edition of 1593 with an extremely suggestive introduction in the *Musical Antiquary* for October 1911.

² Mr. E. van der Straeten, in the first volume of his *History of the Violoncello* has given details of many of these, as well as of those who wrote for the violoncello.

³ See Alfred Einstein, *Zur deutschen Literatur für Viola da Gamba im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert*, Leipzig, 1905, for details of many of the works of this period.

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in the literature of the times. This school is bounded roughly by the period 1660 to 1760, when the violin with its more Italian idiom pushed this most typically Gallic music off the stage. Although its feeling is more emotional than that of our English school, it is expressed with a grace and a dignity that are just as indicative of national character as is our own. In its best moments, and they are not rare, it might be reviewed with humility by any later French composer, not excluding the most famous of recent years.

Its most notable figure, Marin Marais, was a pupil of St. Colombe's, and his first works were published as early as 1686, a year after the volume in tablature by his contemporary, de Machy. Marais was the most accomplished and famous violist of his day, but he was also a composer whose gifts, were they but fully appreciated by his countrymen, should set his name, beside that of Couperin, at the head of French music. He published four more volumes of *Pièces de violes*, the last in 1725, each with a *Basse-continue*; these five volumes contain works for one, two, and three viols, of the greatest beauty and interest, but they make severe demands for execution in the playing of full chords and of intricate parts. Some of the harmonic effects are most striking, and in one the entire cycle of the keys is passed through in a most complicated and masterly fashion.¹ The whole business of playing this music entails a delicate study, for the harmonies are strongly influenced by the correct treatment of the ornaments; the expansion of the figured basses is a big subject, and accent, rhythm, and the unevenness of undotted quavers are other factors to be accounted.² The increasing reliance then being placed upon printed texts led Marais and

¹ *Le Labyrinthe*, in *Pièces à une et à trois violes*. Quatrième livre. Paris, 1717.

² All music of this period can be reduced almost to nonsense by a plain reading of the text in terms of modern notational equivalents. No one should attempt to play it without Mr. Dolmetsch's *Interpretation of the Music of the 17th and 18th Centuries* beside him for reference.

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school to give with their music many instructions for its performance, which remain for us to-day as most valuable guides in its recovery. All ornaments are explained and every doubtful bowing and fingering is carefully marked.

As an example of this music, one of Marais's pieces for a single viol may be mentioned, *La Plainte*, a work full of tender and haunting beauty, of which the appeal will be felt by the modern ear upon first acquaintance, so near is it in idiom to the music that has surrounded the lives of most of us. This ready understanding shows indirectly how far we are removed from the true English music of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for the language of that has almost to be re-learned before its messages can be fully appreciated.

To the important names of de Machy and Marais must be added that of J. B. Forqueray, one of a family of famous violists. His work is highly individual in character and he is perhaps the most interesting of the whole group. In books of the period he frequently appears as Forcroi or Forcray. With, but after, these three, we should speak of de Caix d'Hervelois, whom some no longer regard as one and indivisible, dissociating him from de Caix, who is again but one of a considerable family of Lyonese musicians.¹ The pages of Hubert le Blanc contain many details about this school of violists,² and here a passing mention will do justice to such others as Marais's pupils, de Bellemont and Morel; the younger Marais, Roland; Heudelinne, Boismoitier, Cappus, and Dollé.

Examples from the first book of de Caix d'Hervelois

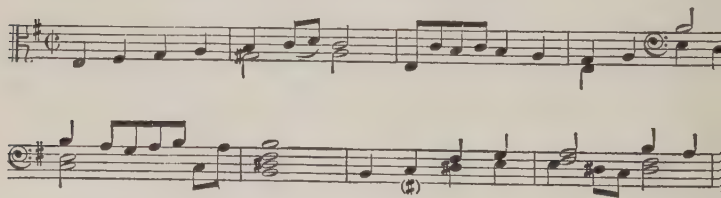
¹ See a valuable series of articles in *Le Bulletin Français de la Société Internationale de Musique* during 1908, by M. Lionel de la Laurencie. The full details about de Caix d'Hervelois are given by the same author in *Le Guide Musical* on pp. 528-30 of an issue of date unknown to me, as I possess but the two odd leaves of it. I do not feel very happy about this subdivision; le Blanc writes as though there were but one 'de Caix'.

² *Défense de la Basse de Viole* (1740), pp. 6, 7, 20, 25, 29, 38, and 40.

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(c. 1710) have been reprinted recently by Durand,¹ and although the figured basses are expanded and a separate score for violoncello added, the original text is preserved. The elaboration of ornaments seems rather overdone by this composer and the present writer must confess to finding them sometimes a trifle irritating; but some of his suites for the treble viol have great charm. In the eighteenth-century works the publications for the *pardessus* become numerous and a significant of the increasing popularity of that instrument. After 1747 there were apparently no more publications for the bass viol, but works for the *pardessus* continued to appear well after 1750. Despite the difference in spirit and treatment from the English viol music, this school composed quite definitely for the viol, and none of these works can be rendered with justice upon the instruments of the violin family.² In the many passing references in French literature of that day we realize how closely associated were the viols, large and small, with home life, and especially how largely the bass and treble viols were used by ladies.

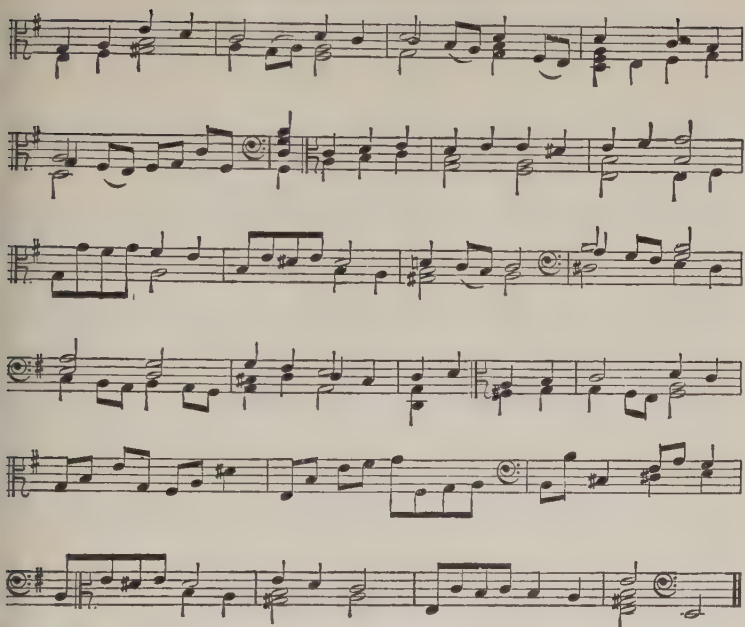
The following Prelude by Christopher Simpson is taken from his book, *The Division Viol* (1659):



¹ Edited by Auguste Chappuis (1907).

² In occasional and late works of popular arrangements of tunes, the *pardessus* is given in association with the violin, but such are not set compositions. For example: *Premier et Deuxième Recueil d'airs françois et italiens. Avec des Variations pour deux Violons, deux Pardessus ou pour une Flutte ou Hautbois avec un Violon*, L'Abbé, le fils [Joseph Barnabé Saint Sévin], Paris, c. 1755.

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CHAPTER II

THE DIVISION VIOL

THE DIVISION VIOL, as an instrument, calls for little or no description, it being only a viol slightly smaller than the full consort bass; and some minor points that demand attention may be left till after an indication has been given of the beginnings of this form of musical development.

In its essence the name 'Divisions on a Ground' implies that, between two long notes on one instrument, another instrument plays a series of shorter notes, beginning and ending upon the notes of the ground or upon a recognized

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consonance with them. Although it is with the seventeenth century that we associate this music, yet it had its genesis long before. How early it appeared for the viols we cannot say but it is certainly indicated for the recorder in Ganassi's book upon that instrument published in 1535,¹ and what was done with the recorder was probably done with other instruments each after its own fashion. Not so very long afterward it is found in full bloom for the viol in the work by Diego Ortiz to which reference has already been made;² and here it is quite obvious he is not exploiting any novel invention of his own. This book is in two parts, the first of which consists of examples of how passages between the notes of a simple ground may be taken, in different keys; and also how the rise or fall of various intervals from a second to a fifth may be elaborated with decorative effect. In his second part there is a number of fully worked out divisions³ upon short grounds as well as a slightly different adaptation of the effect wherein the viol plays a sort of obbligato to a madrigal on the harpsichord.

Here, then, in the middle of the sixteenth century, the idea of the divisions upon a ground is well established in Italy, and we do not know for how much Ortiz was indebted to his native Spain. We know that, certainly in the later part of the sixteenth century, Italy had developed a habit of florid breaking up of melodies and songs⁴ with a truly operatic disregard of the composer, a trouble well illustrated by the familiar quotation from the letter of W. F. Apthorp written on 6 January 1640, after he had heard Archelei sing in the title-role of Peri's *Daphne*. 'She was no beauty, but one of the foremost songsters of the time. She ornamented the written monody with long flourishes and turns which disfigured it

¹ Silvestro Ganassi, *La Fontegara*, 1535. Quoted in *Regola Rubertina*, Vol. I, Cap. XVII. Divisions are also dealt with in Vol. II, Cap. XVIII (19) of the latter work.

² *Trattado de Glosas, etc.*, Rome, 1553.

³ *Recercadas*.

⁴ Zacconi (*op. cit.*, fol. 60 verso) compares instrumental usage.

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but were much in fashion.' That the dayspring of instrumental divisions may have had connexion with this practice is suggested by Conforto's book, issued at the turn of the century, wherein for every interval throughout the octave a variety of cadenzas is given; though his instructions are mainly concerned with singing, some of the runs have double notes or even full chords, only to be played on an instrument akin to the viol or lute. And he closes upon the following practical note:

Seruono anco per quelli che vogliono essercitarsi con la viola, ò altri strumenti da fiato,¹ con sonarli spesso, ò scriuerli con la maniera gia detta; che vsandoli, giouerà à far la mano leggiadra, l'arcata dolce, conoscere il genere del passaggio, come si scriuono, & resterà nella memoria la diuersità di essi: & hauendo sopra ciò fatta bona prattica, si possono poi dimostrare, sonandoli in compagnia all' improuiso. Et non trouando l'vt re, re mi, fa sol, & l sol la, con gl' altri, doue vorresti, che per non far maggior volume mi son ristretto solo al mi fà, per la regola delle chiaui (come hò detto) potrà ciascuno con suo commodo scriuerseli distesi, e per quelle chiaui che desiderarà.²

Of the genesis of division music in England, its truest home, we can say nothing, for when we begin to meet with it in the first quarter of the seventeenth century it is already beyond adolescence, and the works of two of the finest writers of divisions, Daniel Norcombe and Henry Butler, centre around 1630. Unlike the music of the Fantasies, that of the Divisions is of great technical difficulty and abounds in rapid passages requiring constant skipping from one string to another.

This unrelated use of 'other' is not uncommon; compare Anthony Holborne's pieces 'for viols, violins and other musical wind instruments'.

Giovanni Luca Conforto. *Breue et facile maniera d'essercitarsi . . . a far passaggi . . . per cantare . . . ancora serui' p' quoi che sonano di Viola, o d'altri instrumti da fiato . . .* Rome. (The date consists of four digits that look like 1103, but are variously read by bibliographers as 1593 and 1603.) Verso of final leaf.

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They that practice on the Viol, are able to overcome the cold of a Winters morning, and excite a ruddy warmth, which, Physicians, is set as the boundary of an wholsom exercise.¹

In the Fantasy the individual is subordinated to the unity of a whole, but in the Divisions he has free rein to display his abilities. It was the common custom for two violists to play to an organ or harpsichord; one viol played the 'ground', a theme in slow measure repeated many times, while the keyboard instrument filled out the harmonies and the second viol played the divisions upon the ground.

In Playing to a *Ground* we exercise the whole Compass of the Viol, acting therein sometimes the Part of a *Bass*, sometimes *Treble* or some other Part. From hence proceed Two kinds of Divisions, viz. a *Breaking of the Ground*, and a *Descanting upon* the *Ground*. Out of which two, is generated a Third sort of Division; to wit a *Mixture* of Those, one with the other; which Third or last sort is expressed in a two fold Manner; that is, either in Single or Double Notes.

These several sorts of Division are used upon the *Bass-Viol* very promiscuously, according to the Fancy of the Player or Composer . . .²

These terms, Breaking and Descanting, may be explained in Simpson's own words, for it would be difficult indeed to improve upon what is one of the best text-books ever written.

Breaking the *Ground* is the *dividing its Notes into more diminutive Notes*. As for instance, a *Semibreve* may be broken into two *Minims*, four *Crotchets*, eight *Quavers*, sixteen *Semiquavers*, &c. . . .

Descant Division is that which makes a Different-concording-part upon the *Ground*. It differs from the Former in These particulars. That breaks the Notes of the *Ground*; This Descants upon them. That takes the liberty to wander sometimes beneath the *Ground*. This (as in its proper sphere) moves still above it. That meets even

¹ Thomas Salmon, *An Essay to the Advancement of Musick* (1672), p. 9.

² Christopher Simpson, *The Division Viol*, ed. 1667, p. 28.

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succeeding Note of the *Ground*, in the *Unison* or *Octave*; This, in any of the *Concords*. But in the main business of *Division*, they are much the same: for all *Division*, whether *Descant* or *Breaking the Bass*, is but a Transition from Note to Note, or from one Concord to another, either of Degrees or Leaps, with an Intermixture of such Discords as are allowed in Composition.¹

The third part of Simpson's book is devoted to the fullest possible account of the construction and playing of divisions, and to it the reader is referred for more complete details. It is not, fortunately, a very rare book, having gone through three editions; and, as the last of these was in 1712, it would seem that the interest in this form of music did not die as early as the absence of other references would lead us to think.² In the prime of his life Simpson was undoubtedly the greatest English violist and one of the first authorities of his day upon music. His own compositions, which we have seen Mace referring to as 'very voluminous', have hardly survived beyond those that appeared in print, but there are some three-part suites for violins and a set for two treble viols and a bass in manuscript and some divisions in another manuscript, the latter in private hands. One set of divisions has been preserved by the accident that it suited Salmon to use it as an example of his 'Universal Cleff'.³ His personal character is remarkable for the profound respect and admiration which it inspired in all who knew him.

Ibid., pp. 28 and 35.

First edition, 1659; under the title of *The Division Violist*; the engraving of the player occurs in two states, the later without a hat: the second edition, M.DC.LXVII; the last two figures being added with a hand stamp on all known copies, from which it may be assumed that its issue was delayed by the plague and the Great Fire; the title is now *The Division Viol*, and a Latin translation by William Marsh accompanies the text in parallel columns: the third edition, 1712; a reprint of the second edition. All are in folio.

Another evidence of late survival of the viols in England is the practical reference to both Tenor and Bass in De La Fond's *A New System of Music*, 1725, pp. 153 and 154.

Thomas Salmon, *An Essay to the Advancement of Musick* (1672), p. 46.

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... that person whose memory is precious among good and knowing men. Whom indeed I greatly honour, for that double accomplishment of his exemplary life, as well as excellent skill.¹

Not only are such eulogies of him general by contemporaries' hands, but as late as 1724 a writer on music refers to him as 'an incomparable Author'.² His pupil, Sir John Bolles, son of his patron, Sir Robert Bolles, went to Rome soon after the middle of the seventeenth century, and, like Maugars of his generation before, astonished the Italians by the superiority of his playing. In a Latin panegyric upon his performance his teacher's fame is seen to have extended abroad:

Vividum claro, celebrémque alumno
Laudo Simpsonum . . .³

At the end of *The Division Viol* there is a number of pieces for 'beginners', preludes and such-like, and a set of some eight *Divisions for the practice of Learners*. Any player to-day may feel proud indeed if he has acquired a mastery over the 'tutorial' pieces!

A Viol for Division, should be of something a lesser size than a Consort Bass; that so the Hand may better command it: more or less short, according to the reach of his fingers, who is to use it; but the ordinary size, such as may carry a String of thirty Inches from the Bridge (duely placed) to the Nut. The Sound should be quick and sprightly, like a Violin; and Viols of that shape (the Bellies being digged out of a Plank) do commonly render such a Sound. . . .

¹ Thomas Salmon, *A Vindication of an Essay to the Advancement of Musick* (1677) p. 57.

² William Turner, *Sound Anatomiz'd, in a Philosophical Essay on Musick* (1724) p. 31.

³ *Ode; Jacobi Albani Ghibbesii* (Rome, 1661). The verses are given in full in *The Division Viol* (ed. 1667 and 1712).

⁴ See footnote, p. 37 *supra*. From various measurements given by Simpson of instruments and bows, it seems that his 30 inches was equal to about 27½ inches B.O.T. standard; in fact, his 'foot' would correspond almost exactly to the standard 'Burgos foot' of Spain.

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The strings a little bigger than those of a Lyra-Viol; which must be laid at the like nearness to the Finger-board, for ease and convenience of Stopping.¹

The third part of Simpson's book expounds all the ways and combinations of ways in which the player may treat his subject and this style of performance. Perhaps it is only to be expected that the leader of his profession should have been able to do some of his best work when extemporizing divisions, but it is an indication of a general level of musical culture of that day, almost unbelievable now, that the amateur of ability should have been expected to do the same thing. Yet, without previous preparation, the players could go through a whole set of varied counter-play, in which the second viol sometimes abandoned the ground and extemporized its own divisions against those of the first viol, until they finally joined together

a Thunderous Strain of *Quick Division*; with which they may conclude; or else with a Strain of slow and sweet Notes, according to what may best suite the circumstance of time and place.

I have known this kind of *Extemporary Musick*, sometimes (when it was performed by Hands accustomed to Play together) pass off with greater applause, than those Divisions which had been most laboriously composed.²

Such music was not the prerogative of the bass viol, for sometimes two trebles would make divisions to a harpsichord, just as did the two basses; or a treble and a bass would be so joined, the treble descanting, while the lower voice was breaking the ground.³ Further developments were studied, in

Christopher Simpson, *The Division Viol* (1667), pp. 1 and 2. The plate facing page 1 shows two viols, one of ordinary outline, the other with the body of the violoncello outline, but C-shaped sound-holes; viols like to the latter are not uncommon, and some are very old. What difference he means to imply 'the Bellies digged out of a Plank' I do not know, as *all* viols have bellies carved out of the solid in the usual manner.

Ibid., p. 59.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

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which three instruments played together, as two trebles and a bass, two basses and one treble, or three basses.

But here you are to take notice, that the *Divisions* of Three Parts are not usually made upon *Grounds*; but rather Composed in the manner of *Fancies*; beginning commonly with some *Fuge*, and then falling into Points of *Division*; answering one another; sometimes two against one, and sometimes all engaged at once in a contest of *Division*: But (after all) ending commonly in grave and harmonious Musick.¹

There are now some expert players of the composed division and this neglected and unknown part of our musical history is at last receiving the attention it deserves; but very few have travelled far enough on this road of recovery to be able to meet together and extemporize like the old masters. The few examples here given from Simpson's classic work are meagre examples of the full measure of his information; the book gives, almost better than any other, a vivid picture of the state of instrumental musical culture around the middle of the seventeenth century and thereby helps to gauge the frightful decadence that set in before the century was passed. Those who have heard division well played will appreciate Bacon's picturesque reference:

The *Division* and *Quavering*, which please so much in *Musick* have an Agreement with the *Glittering* of *Light*; As the *Moon's Beames* playing upon a *Wave*.²

With all the rapid advance in the study of the viol that was proceeding in France in Rousseau's day, this form of composition and playing found little favour.

Il y en a une cinquième [manière] qui consiste à travailler Sujet sur le champ, mais il est peu en usage; parce qu'il demande un homme consommé dans la Composition & dans l'exercice de la Viole, avec une grande vivacité d'esprit.³

¹ Christopher Simpson, *The Division Viol* (1667), p. 60.

² *Sylva Sylvarum*, Century II, No. 113.

³ Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la Viole* (1687), p. 55. There are some examples

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but he speaks of Maugars and of one le Père André as having been accomplished in the art of extemporary division playing.¹

And this will be found to give point to Simpson's final paragraph, with which the chapter may be fitly closed.

In these several sorts of *Division* of *two* and *three Parts*, my self, amongst others more eminent, have made divers Compositions, which perhaps might be useful to young Musicians, either for their Imitation or Practice: but the Charge of Printing *Divisions* as I have experienced by the *Cuts* of the *Examples* in this present book) doth make that kind of Musick less communicable. However, if you desire written Copies of that sort, (a thing most necessary for those who intend to Compose such like themselves) one has done so much in that kind, as the ever Famous and most excellent Composer, in all sorts of Modern Musick, Mr. *John Jenkins*. And here I might mention (were it not out of the rode of my design) divers Eminent men in this our Kingdom; who, in their various and excellent Compositions, especially for Instruments, have (in my opinion) far out done those Nations so much py'd up for their excellency in Musick: but my naming them would signifie little, they being sufficiently known and honoured by their own Works; neither had I taken upon me to nominate any particular person, had it not been upon the necessary accompt of *Division-Musick*, the peculiar Subject of our now ended Discourse.²

CHAPTER III

THE LYRA VIOL, OR VIOLA BASTARDA

ALTHOUGH the name LYRA VIOL became attached so definitely to a certain small form of bass viol, yet we should, to be correct, speak of 'the viol used Lyra way', as the difference is one of tuning and not of design.

such as Marais's divisions upon *La Follia*; also those upon another, and English, found, stated to have been given to him 'by a foreigner'.

Ibid., pp. 23 and 24.

² *The Division Viol* (1667), p. 61.

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All the Notes which are upon the Viol *De-Gambo*, are also upon the Lyra Viol, though in other places; but that those other places on the Lyra Tuning, are most convenient, is proved by the Musick-Masters themselves, who generally set their sweetest Airs, and pleasantest Suits of Lessons that way.¹

Most of the Lyra music can be played on a division viol with its tuning adapted, but in practice it was found more suitable to have an instrument of rather smaller size, and the typical lyra viol of the seventeenth century is so much smaller than the full consort bass as almost to bear comparison with a very large tenor, the length of the sounding string between nut and bridge being twenty-three to twenty-five inches. Praetorius, it is true, states that the *viola bastarda* is a type of tenor viola da gamba, but a little longer and deeper in body.² But it must be remembered that when he speaks of its tuning being something like that of a tenor, the pitch to which he refers is that of the English bass.

A great variety of effects resulted from the various tunings; each bringing its special set of chords and a new scheme of harmony. The smaller size of the instrument facilitated the fingering of the chords. From the description, illustration, and tunings given by Praetorius, it is obvious that his *viola bastarda* was the same thing as the English lyra viol, the name presumably having been given on account of its mixed tunings; yet of German music for this instrument we are woefully ignorant.

Owing to the difficulty that would arise in trying to read from staff notation upon an instrument the tuning of which might vary with every piece to be played, this music was invariably written in tablature, in the same manner as that for plucked instruments like the lute; in this notation the tuning of the strings is, of course, a matter of indifference to the

¹ Thomas Salmon, *An Essay to the Advancement of Musick* (1672), p. 49.

² Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, Vol. II (1618), Chap. XXI.

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player, once the intervals have been set. But if the particular tuning for which the tablature was written is not available, it can only be recovered by an exhaustive trial-and-error process, and for this reason it was the practice to set the tuning, by tablature, before each piece or set of pieces. Hence it comes that certain waifs and strays that have survived fortuitously in manuscript collections cannot be restored to active life until the tuning for which they were written has been deduced at the expense of much irritating effort; a fate which also befell works for the lute, when the tunings of that instrument underwent so many variations in the seventeenth century.

More than half a century after this music began to find popularity in England, John Playford gives an account of its introduction.

The *Lero* or *Lyra Violl*, is so called from the Latin word *Lyra*, which signifies a *Harp*. This way of playing on the *Violl*, is of late invention, an Imitation of the Old English *Lute* or *Bandora*, whose lessons were prickt down by certain Letters of the Alphabet, upon Six Lines or Rules; which 6. lines did allude to the 6. course of strings upon those Instruments, as they do now unto the 6. strings of the *Viol*. The First Authors of Inventing and Setting lessons this way to the *Violl*, was, [*sic*] Mr. *Daniel Farunt*, Mr. *Alphonso Ferabosco*, and Mr. *John Coperario* alias *Cooper*; The First of these was a person of such Ingenuity for his several Rare Inventions of Instruments, as the *Poliphant* and the *Stump*, which were strung with Wire: And also of his last, which was a *Lyra Viol*, to be strung with Lute Strings and Wire Strings, the one above the other; the *Wire* Strings were conveyed through a hollow passage made in the Neck of the *Viol*, and so brought to the Tail thereof, and raised a little above the Belly of the *Viol*, by a Bridge about $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch: These were so laid that they were Equivalent to those above, and were Tun'd *Unisons* to those above, so that the striking of those Strings above with the *Bow*, a Sound was drawn from those of Wire underneath, which made it very

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Harmonious. Of this sort of *Viols*, I have seen many, but *Tim* and *Disuse* has set them aside.¹

This has proved a strangely dangerous passage to some historians. By a confusion of ideas, the interesting forecast described therein of the principle of the viola d'amore and of the baryton has been assumed to be the distinctive feature of the lyra viol, and, in consequence, the invention of lyra playing has been attributed to Daniel Farrant. Praetorius appears to have thought that this use of sympathetic strings was peculiar to England; and, as Playford observed, it was soon abandoned. There is another contemporary reference to this feature in Bacon's *Sylva Sylvarum*.

It was devised, that a *Viall* should have a Lay of Wire Strings below, as close to the Belly as a *Lute*: And then the *Strings* of Guts mounted upon a Bridge, as in Ordinary *Vialls*: To the end, that by this means, the upper *Strings* strucken, should make the lower resound by *Sympathy*, and so make the *Musick* the better; Which, if it be to purpose, then *Sympathy* worketh as well by Report of *Sound*, as by *Motion*. But this device I conceive to be of no use because the upper *Strings*, which are stopped in great variety cannot maintain a *Diapason* or *Unison*, with the Lower, which are never stopped. But if it should be of use at all; it must be in *Instruments* which have no stops; As *Virginalls*, or *Harps*; wherein triall may be made of two Rowes of Strings, distant the one from the other.³

However, the musicians of the day must have found that sympathetic vibrations were not limited to the unison and the octave; and so they did not wait for the scientists to discover the theory of natural overtones before making use of the fact of their existence.

¹ John Playford, *Musick's Recreation on The VIOL, Lyra-way*, 1661, Preface. This extremely rare work went through several editions: in the earlier issue the title was *Musick's Recreation on the LYRA VIOL* (e.g. 1652, of which edition the British Museum copy lacks the leaf with the Preface).

² *Syntagma Musicum* (1618), Vol. II, p. 47.

³ Century III, No. 280.

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In Playford's list of names of early composers of lyra music there are many notable exceptions, such as William Corkine and Tobias Hume; the latter seems especially to have realized the fresh ground in music which the lyra method had opened up. A small piece has also been preserved, written in 1614 apparently for the lyra viol, by Walter Rowe, one of the many English musicians who, like William Brade, worked almost entirely abroad.¹

So popular did this use of the viol become in England in the seventeenth century that a mere catalogue of the works would take up considerable space; but those later developments find greatest success in the hands of men whom we have already met as composers of fantasies and of solo suites.

Long before Jenkins and his fellows had developed the lyra music, those whom we must, for want of other information, regard as the English pioneers of this use of the viol had found in it a means for expressing ideas in a way that was quite novel for a bowed instrument, and it is astonishing to see how far this had been explored. While it is true that the method is most comparable to the structure of lute music, the character is distinctive, as befits the different attack, and in the hands of one of its first exponents it is already made an effective vehicle for the descriptive 'programme' piece. Nor was the lyra viol always used singly, for sometimes two or even three lyras played together; or it was combined with higher voices, trebles also tuned to the lyra tuning, as in Captain Tobias Hume's first book.²

For a facsimile and translation see *Zwei Stammbuchblätter aus dem Jahre 1614*, by Wilhelm Tappert, in *The Chord*, No. 5 (Sept., 1900), pp. 53 et seq. The piece given in tablature converts into musical sense through one of the tunings for the viola bastarda given by Praetorius; it looks at first sight like a piece for the lute. Prof. E. J. Dent speaks very highly of Brade; but, unfortunately, none of his music seems to be available in England.

Hume is a strange figure in our Elizabethan musical world. For all his rakish humour, his music is solidly grounded, and he must be accorded the

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THE FIRST PART OF AYRES . . . for the Viole de Gambo alone, and other Musicall Conceits for two Base Viols, expressing fiue partes, with pleasant reportes one from the other, & for two Leero Viols, and also for the Leero Viole with two Treble Viols, or two with one Treble. Lastly for the Leero Viole to play alone, and some songs to bee sung to the Viole, with the Lute, or better with the Viole alone. Also an Inuention for two to play vpon one Viole. (London, 1605.)

A second volume was issued two years later, in much the same strain.¹

Ferrabosco's book of pieces for the lyra viol was issued soon after;² it contains works for the viol, alone and in combination, that are naturally pitched in a more elevated strain than those of Hume, and he also uses a greater variety of tunings. The possibilities of variation in the tuning are, of course, very great, and there is no such thing as 'the tuning of the lyra viol'; for it was arranged by each composer as best suited to the nature and key of the piece. It might be, and indeed often was, simply in the ordinary viol tuning, but by the use of intervals of fifths with either thirds or fourths a greatly extended range could be obtained, and the full chords rendered much more easy to stop.

I would therefore play . . . upon some pleasant *Lyra* Tuning, that the most frequent Notes be always struck open, that their Con-

honour of being the first to express in print the extent of the new field that this use of the viol was to open up to the seventeenth century. He fell to madness and poverty and died after spending fifteen years as a Poor Brother in the Charter House. An excellent account of Hume is given in *The English Ayre*, by Peter Warlock (World's Manuals Series).

¹ *Poeticall Musicke*, London, 1609.

² *Lessons for 1. 2. and 3. Viols*, London, 1607.

Musick's maister and the offspring
Of rich Musicks Father,
Old Alphonso's Image liuing.

T. CAMPION.

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ards may be their nearest neighbours, and at last the whole
iol, with an unstop'd freedom, may eccho forth a full Consort-
oke, usually the key of the Lesson.¹

Hume uses either the ordinary viol tuning or else what he
lls the 'Bandora set', though it does not follow the bandora
actly in the lowest notes.²

(1)
$$\begin{array}{c} a \\ \hline f a \\ \hline e a \\ \hline f a \\ \hline h a \\ \hline f \end{array} \quad C \quad F \quad c \quad f \quad a \quad d' \quad (\text{The Bandora Set})$$

Ferrabosco³ uses this bandora set and also two others.

(2)
$$\begin{array}{c} a \\ \hline f a \\ \hline f a \\ \hline h a \\ \hline f a \\ \hline h \end{array} \quad AA \quad E \quad A \quad e \quad a \quad d'$$

(3)
$$\begin{array}{c} a \\ \hline f a \\ \hline h a \\ \hline f a \\ \hline h a \\ \hline f \end{array} \quad AA \quad D \quad A \quad d \quad a \quad d'$$

Praetorius⁴ gives five tunings for the viola bastarda, of
hich the first is the ordinary viol tuning and the third and

Thomas Salmon, *An Essay to the Advancement of Musick* (1672), p. 49.

See Appendix IV for explanation of Tablature notation.

Opus cit. These tunings Nos. 1 and 2 are used for the lyra viol by John
Synard in *The XII Wonders of the World*, London, 1611.

Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, Vol. II (1618), p. 26. The tuning
5 is, of course, simply that of the ordinary viol with the lowest string
lowered one tone; instructions for this occur frequently in Hume's books.

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fourth correspond to Nos. 2 and 3 above; the remainder run thus:

- (4) *AA D G d a d'*
 (5) *C G c e a d'*

John Playford, writing many years after the composers quoted above, gives yet other settings:

There are several varieties of *Tunings*, according to the Inventions of several Artists or Composers of the Lessons: As first, *Harp-way Sharp*, and *Harp-way Flat*, next *High Harp-way Flat*, and *High Harp-way Sharp*; several other Tunings there are, but these are the most usual.¹

(6) Harp-way Sharp.

a	
d a	
e a	
f a	D G d g b d'
h a	
f	

(7) Harp-way Flat.

a	
e a	
d a	
f a	D G d g b $\flat$ d'
h a	
f	

(8) High Harp-way Sharp.

a	
f a	
d a	
e a	D A d f $\sharp$ a d'
f a	
h	

¹ *Musick's Recreation on The VIOL, Lyra-way* (1661), sig. A3 recto: this edition is much more elaborate than that of 1652, in which 'bandora set' is largely used.

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(9) High Harp-way Flat.

a	
f a	
e a	
d a	D A d f a d'
f a	
h	

(10)

Here beginneth the Lesson to the Bag-pipe Tuning which is aid on the 4. first Strings.

a	
f a	
h	D d a d'

Changing the 5. string into the 4th strings place and Tune it an eighth to the 3. string.¹

It should be noted that all these tunings are, with the exception of those of Praetorius, given in the originals in tablature and are therefore irrespective of pitch; they have been translated for convenience, with the top string in each case to the ordinary bass-viol pitch.

Of the pieces given by Thomas Mace, the last is set for the Harp-way Tuning Sharp', but the tablature of the tuning corresponds to the Harp-way Flat tuning,² and as this page has been reproduced without correction, it may have led to some confusion. An examination of the music itself shows that the tuning-tablature is misprinted; it should read as b. 6 above.

The existence of so much lyra music at the turn of the 17th century is a fact. The tunings given here are taken from the various editions, 1662, 1661, 1669, and 1682.

Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument* (1676), p. 259.

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sixteenth century forms one of the most convincing directions of evidence of the high standard of instrumental technique of the day. For the individual parts of a fantasy, the demands upon the technique of the player are not, as a rule, greater, however much is expected of his musicianship. The playing of divisions may be a performance of real interpretation, but also it can, as an uninspired display of execution, retain all that dead efficiency with which every critic is so sadly familiar in other spheres; and practice and experience will enable the least imaginative violist to improvise, solo, a sort of mechanical divisions *ad infinitum*. But nothing short of a perfect technique and a sound musical sense will serve to permit the complexities of lute music to emerge in their true relations. The most careful tonal treatment and phrasing are necessary for the imitative contrapuntal parts to be made clear, and there are several points of technique to be observed, those directed to emphasizing the correct note when several are played together, and to the fingering that shall ensure the sustaining of notes for their correct duration.

I will . . . show how to *Rectefie 2 Very Grand Faults; Generally committed in Viol-Play, by most Scholars, and some Masters also, (or at least such as go for Masters.)*

The *One Fault* is in the *Right Hand*, the other in the *Left*.

That of the *Right Hand* is, that whenever They should strike a *Full Stop*,¹ They seldom *Hit* the *Lowest String*, which is the very *Substantiality* of *That Stop*; It being the *Ground* to all *Those Upper Parts*, and without which the rest of *That Stop* is (*Generally*) all *False Musick*.

'Therefore I Advise, ever when you come to a *Full Stop*, be sure to give 'the *Lowest String* a Good *Full Share* of your Bow, (*Singly, by It self* 'before you *Slide It upon the Rest*) and *Leave It likewise with a little* 'Eminency of Smartness, by *Swelling the Bow a little, when you part with* 'That String. This will make your Play very *Lovely*.' . . .

¹ A 'Full Stop': when several notes are sounded together on the Viol or Lute

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The 2d. is no less Gross, yet more Commonly Committed, and is of the Left Hand, viz. They seldom Hold their Holds according to Propriety, and Necessity of the Composition.

Now This is a Mystery to all Common Performers; and (to my Knowledge) to several, who go for (or serve the Turn instead of) Very Good Master-Teachers, to their Own Great Disgrace; The Abuse of Good Lessons; The Authors of Them; and Their Scholars; as I shall make it very Plain, by Example.

And I will take the more Pains to Explain This Error; because It is the Grossest that can be Committed in the Kind.

'And that you may know the Right meaning of a Hold, observe; the Best Lessons of the Best Masters are often so Compos'd, as They shall seem to be Single, and very Thin Things, viz. All Single Letters, without any Full Stops, &c. Yet upon a Judicious Examination, there will be found a Perfect Composition, of an Intire Bass and Treble; with Strong Intimations of Inner Parts.

'And whosoever shall undertake the Management of a Viol, and shall not in his Play, or Composition, be able to show such a Piece of Mastery, must needs be accounted beneath a Master-Composer: But he who shall Neglect, or be Ignorant in the Way of Right Playing such Compositions of other Men, whereby Those Perfections ought to be Express'd, which are mainly Considerable, as to the Propriety, and Support of such Compositions: He, I say, must needs be counted Deficient in Judgement, and Skill; and not fit to be owned, as a Master, or Teacher.'¹

One other feature of the lyra music must be mentioned, in the elaborate use often made of the pizzicato, sometimes even for both hands. Playford's tablature indicates such notes with the signs ∙ or ♪ and he refers to this treatment as *The Thump*;² but long plucked passages are found in the lyra music of thirty years, and more, before the date of his book, and their introduction, thanks to the great resonance of the viol, can be made most effective. At risk of repetition, the

Thomas Mace, *Musick's Monument* (1676), pp. 249-50. The holds to which he refers are indicated in the tablature, as in that for the lute, by oblique lines following the letter affected.

John Playford, *Musick's Recreation on the Lyra Viol*, edns. of 1652 and 1669.

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importance of the correct treatment of the ornaments must again be insisted upon; space prevents a list being given here; they will be found set out with some thoroughness in Simpson's *Division Viol*,¹ and in other works of the period, but Mr. Dolmetsch's book upon them is the safest practical guide.

One paragraph from Simpson must, however, be included here, for it says much for that sense of careful technique which it has been the writer's duty to prove, in defiance of academic authority:

Gracing of Notes is performed in two wayes, *viz.* by the Bow, and by the Fingers. By the Bow, as when we play Loud or Soft, according to our fancy, or the humour of the Musick. Again, this Loud or Soft is sometimes express'd in one and the same Note, as when we make it Soft at the *beginning*, and then (as it were) swell or grow louder toward the *middle* or *ending*. Some also affect a Shake or Tremble with the Bow, like the Shaking-Stop of an Organ, but the frequent use thereof is not (in my opinion) much commendable. To these may be added that of Playing two, three, four or more Notes with one motion of the Bow, which would not have that Grace or Ornament if they were play'd severally.²

The seventeenth-century violist had a proper horror of the constant vibrato, and he appreciated the immensely increased value of such an effect when used sparingly as a means of contrast.

This part music upon the single instrument may be re-

¹ Upon the engraved plate on page 12 is the inscription:

For these, I am obliged to the ever famous Charles Coleman Doctor in Musick.

As Simpson was just as famous as, and probably more accomplished than, Coleman, some explanation seems demanded. It is possibly to be found in the fact that the Table of Graces proper to the Viol or Violin was added to Playford's *Skill of Musick* for the first time in the fourth issue of 1660, and as Simpson and Coleman were associated with the early editions of that work, and as the subject-matter of the two tables is much the same, Simpson may have used material which Coleman had drawn up for Playford.

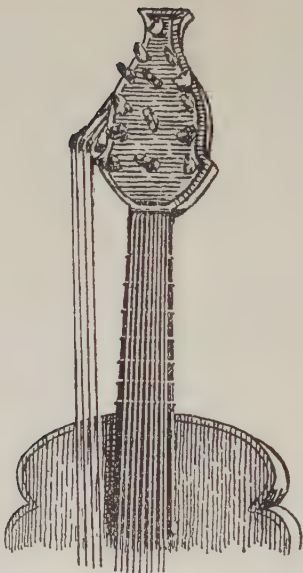
² Christopher Simpson, *The Division Viol* (1667), p. 10.

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arded as the last development in the viol's long history, for the later schools of solo writers, of which the French are the most notable, do but employ the same principles. It is a development that is especially English and, as we see from Rousseau's book, due credit was given to this country for it.¹ In a way, the lyra viol looks back to the distant past of the instrument, with its pizzicato reminiscent of the days when viol and lute were nearer together; and, with its full harmonies, it echoes the lyra da braccia of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

... [les] Anglois qui ont commencé les premiers à composer & à jouer des pièces d'harmonie sur la Viole, & qui en ont porté la connoissance dans les autres Royaumes, tels qu'on esté VVALDERAN à la Cour de Saxe, BOUDLER à la Cour d'Espagne, JOUNG auprès du Comte d'Inspruk, PREIS à Vienne, & plusieurs autres en differents endroits.' (*Traité de la Viole*, p. 18.)

'Joung' is presumably William Young and 'Preis' may be the John Price whose performances upon the galoubet are recorded by Mersenne; but, beyond wild guess that 'VValderan' may conceal the identity of Walter Rowe, the names are unknown to me.



HEAD OF A LYRA DA GAMBA

W. Tieffenbrucker. Padua, c. 1590
(in the Vienna Collection)

This type of head, as also the typical heart-shaped head of the Lyra da Braccia, was made like a shallow box, open at the back ; after passing over the nut the strings were carried behind the head to the pegs.

BOOK II
THE LYRA FAMILY

CHAPTER I

THE LYRA DA BRACCIA

FROM the story of the viols, so replete with detail throughout our period, we turn to an instrument about which it is impossible to present a coherent account, and yet one of which a popular and constant utility is forced upon us at every turn. Examples of the LYRA DA BRACCIA are so exceedingly rare that the few authentic specimens form the most treasured possessions of one or two famous collections; for contemporary information about its structure and technique we are even more hardly pressed, while the music proper to it would seem to be simply non-existent.¹ Yet the more we consider the references to it in the art and literature throughout the sixteenth century, and earlier, the more we are compelled to believe in its importance and its distinctive nature; and we must realize that until greater knowledge of it is obtained, our whole outlook upon both the music of this period and the history of bowed instruments remains imperfect.

In appearance the lyra da braccia may be compared to a very large alto violin (the 'viola' of to-day), but one with a outline commonly smoothed almost to squareness and with a whole effect much more flat.² Its stringing and tuning are alike peculiar; and it retained to the end a characteristic head for the pegs, which pass through vertically, as in the old guitar, and do not enter at the side as in the viols and violins. It is held, like the rebec and violin, under the chin or against the breast and is played with a long bow. In the art of the Italian primitives it receives an attention second

¹This, it is hoped, may need qualification as manuscript collections, particularly abroad, are more fully explored.
²See Plate IX.

THE LYRA FAMILY

only to that accorded to the lute, and in other parts of Europe it would seem to have been equally in evidence. In carving in English churches, which may date to the thirteenth century, it is well shown in its most characteristic form,¹ not to speak of the illuminations in manuscripts of a similar period.

In very many of these early examples there can be clearly seen a feature that is typical of the instrument; the bass strings are set outside the finger-board and serve the purpose of drones.

The earliest writer within our period to give definite information about the tuning of the lyra is Lanfranco, who places it at the head of those instruments, the 'accordature' of which he gives 'per compiacer ad alcuni amici miei'. Passing over his comparisons with the lyra of the classics and the similitude of the seven strings to the seven planets, we may translate his diagram of the strings into the following notes, irrespective of pitch, which he never indicates:²

$\underbrace{c} \underbrace{c'} \underbrace{f} \underbrace{f'} c' g' d''$

This pitch has been selected for illustration because it gives exactly the same notes as those that are found eighty years later in Cerone's book.³ The only other work that has come to the writer's notice giving a definite tuning for this instrument is that of the omniscient Praetorius, where a slightly different arrangement is found (the pitch being definite):⁴

$\underbrace{d} \underbrace{d'} \underbrace{g} \underbrace{g'} d' a' d''$

¹ A particularly good example will be found popular as a cast in most large art schools.

² Giovanni Maria Lanfranco, *Scintille di Musica*, Brescia (1533), p. 136. His diagram is a little confusing at first sight, but resolves itself clearly in the light of his accompanying description.

³ Pedro Cerone, *El Melopeo*, Naples, 1613, Bk. XXI, Chap. 14, p. 1053.

⁴ *Syntagma Musicum*, Vol. II, 1618, p. 26.

THE LYRA DA BRACCIA

The name *lyra moderna* is often applied to this instrument, with obvious distinction from classic associations of the word. Historical evidence is divided as to the use of frets, but it is quite certain that it was intended to be played without them, for Lanfranco says that the positions must be found by touch and ear,

...tasti della qual Lyra si trouano a tastone: & a orecchia: poscia che in essa altrimenti non si pongono.¹

And this is confirmed by Bottrigaro, who places the lyra amongst the instruments which, having neither finger-holes or frets, are not limited to fixed notes.

I strumenti al tutto alterabili sono tutti quelli, che non hanno buchi, ne tasti, come sono Tromboni, & Ribechini, e Lire, simili. . . .²

For Praetorius, in his *Sciagraphia* (Plate XX), shows it clearly without frets.

The only definite information that is known to the writer about the practical use of the lyra da braccia is found in Ganassi and Praetorius. The former compares the use of the lyra to that of the viol for playing music in more than one part to the 'lyra de sette corde', but we learn little beyond this from him; the latter, after telling us about its seven strings, of which two are off the finger-board, adds:

...brauff man *Tricinia*, und auch andere Sachen, fast einer Citter gleich, zuwege bringen kan.⁴

Apart from pictures and general literature, the lists of instruments so often given in sixteenth-century publications contain many references to the lyra, and of its wide use there can be no doubt. Yet the early seventeenth century seems

¹ *Ibid.* cit., p. 137.

² Hercole Bottrigaro, *Il Desiderio* (1599), p. 5. Also Girolamo Ganassi, *Regola Rubertina*, Vol. II (1543), Cap. XVI.

³ Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, Vol. II (1618), Cap. XXIII, p. 49; p. 7 he calls the lyra, 'πολύτονα, vielstimmig, Multi voca'.

THE LYRA FAMILY

hardly to know it, and from thence it passes altogether out of our sight. After Cerone, Praetorius is almost the only one to mention it;¹ and in his remarkable third volume of 1613, although it is given in the general list, it does not occur in any of the numerous examples he gives of varieties of instrumental combination for different effects.

As the reader can possibly speculate as well as, or better than, the writer upon the method of use of the lyra, the matter will have to be left in the position given by the above information, observing only that it should be studied in the reflected light obtained from what is known of the larger form of the instrument, the lyra da gamba or lirone. Upon one point the writer desires to record a conviction, which is, that the lyra da braccia is an individual instrument with a long pre-history of its own, in which the prevailing inventiveness is Western and harmonic, and not Eastern and melodic: also that it has no point of contact with the viols, though it may have had an influence upon the genesis of the violin.²

CHAPTER II

THE LYRA DA GAMBA

BEFORE the middle of the sixteenth century there are no references to a bass of the lyra da braccia, but soon after 1550 such a form is found in general use; beyond this broad statement it is unsafe to say anything of the date of the introduction of the LYRA DA GAMBA. The instrument passes under many names, of which *lirone* and *archiviola* and *lyra* should be noted; some writers have assumed a gradation

¹ The 'Lyra' listed by Augustino Agazzario is possibly a harp; see *Sacra cantionum, Liber II, Opus V*, Venice, 1613 (the *Basso-Continuo* part).

² Of the many examples in the paintings in our National Gallery, the lyra da braccia played by the angel of Ambrogio de Predis (c. 1500) is one of the best to study; note the typical head, the side peg for the bourdon strings, and flat bridge. But the bow here used is shorter than that usually depicted.

THE LYRA DA GAMBA

sizes to which these various names should be applied, but for this there appears to be no contemporary evidence.¹ 'Unrone' appears several times in the intermedia of Striggio and Corteccia of 1565, to which reference has been made in previous chapter,² and from then to the time of Praetorius³ the name is a familiar item in lists of instruments accompanying masques, operas, and oratorios. That its use continued after this in Italy is shown by Maugars' account of the music which he heard in Rome in 1639. Unfortunately, we are here in the same case as with the older, and smaller, parent lyra, for compositions proper to the lyra da gamba are still unknown to us and specimens of the instrument are extremely rare. The loss of the actual instruments is not surprising in view of the whole-hearted destruction of older things that characterized the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries; but the music, one feels convinced, must exist somewhere in manuscript collections, for the lyra da gamba played a part of great importance in Italian music, as well as elsewhere, for a century, and its nature would appear to make a written tablature essential to the players.

The chief authorities for this instrument are Cerreto, Praetorius, and Mersenne; and of these the first named is the only one who has left anything detailed as to the technique of playing. From the others we gather certain facts about the structure of the lyra da gamba, and it is upon these, in conjunction with existing specimens, that the present description is based. The comparison must be made with a bass viola da gamba for approximate size, but to one that has become widened and has acquired a very broad neck and a long

Praetorius, indeed, uses all three for the one instrument; and adds two more of his own, *Lirone perfetto* and *grosse italienische lyra*, together with a Greek form, *ῥα ἐπυγουνιδία* (*sic*).

See *supra*, p. 113.

Syntagma Musicum, Vol. III (1619). See many of the examples of instrumental combination.

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bridge, flat and low, as is demanded by the number of strings which was never less than eleven and sometimes as great as sixteen. It may be justifiably assumed, though it is not definitely stated, that the strings must have been very thin for their sounding length was from 25 to 27 inches and the pitch to which they were tuned is higher than that of the bass viol. Moreover, the musical use dictates a string that will respond readily to a light stroke and, according to Mersenne, one of the features of the effect was the occurrence of sympathetic vibrations, giving harmonics amongst the unbowed strings.¹ When the tunings are given, it will be seen what a wide variation there is in the pitches stated by the different authorities; in the absence of more practical acquaintance, these must be left rather in the state of things unresolved.

The typical pair of bourdon strings outside the finger-board, and the basis of the tuning, show the close connexion with the lyra da braccia. Strictly speaking, there is no one definite tuning for the lyra da gamba; for, as Mersenne says, *il est libre à vn chacun d'accorder la Lyre comme il voudra, car il n'importe pourueu que l'on puisse toucher les accords aysément en couchant l'index sur les touches comme l'on fait ordinairement pour faire quatre ou cinq accords.*²

In order to achieve this end, the strings were tuned alternately a fifth downward and a fourth upward, apart from the top string; thus: if the strings be numbered consecutively from the top 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, &c., then the odd numbers descend down a diatonic scale, while the even numbers descend a second diatonic scale pitched a fifth below. This is varied by the omission of the first note of the upper scale, so that the note of the top string is a fourth below that of the second string.

¹ Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie universelle* (1636), Livre Quatriesme des Instrumens, Prop. X, p. 206.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 207-9.

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These arrangements will be seen in the following five tunings, the interest of which is principally one of pitch, for it will be noticed that they may all be resolved to a common system:

(1) Cerreto (1601). Eleven strings.¹

G g c c' g d' a e' b $\natural$ f'♯ c'♯

(2) Praetorius (1618). Fourteen strings.²

G $\flat$ d $\flat$ A $\flat$ e $\flat$ B $\flat$ f c g d a e b $\natural$ f'♯ c'♯

Here will be seen the higher octave on the odd numbered strings, so that, in the first seven, the even numbered strings are an octave below their fellows in the first example. Praetorius is peculiar, if his bourdon strings are a fifth apart; with the others, the interval is always an octave. But it is possible that his bourdons are not shown on his chart, in spite of the distinctive nature of the last two notes.

(3) Mersenne (1636). Fifteen strings.³

c c' d d' g g' d' a e' b $\natural$ f'♯ c'♯ g'♯ d'♯ a'♯

Like example (2), the higher scale is given to the odd numbers, but six notes higher; notice here the two pairs of octave strings on the finger-board, for the last two only are bourdon strings.

(4) Mersenne (1636). Fifteen strings.⁴

c c' d d' g g' d' a' e' b' $\natural$ f'♯ c''♯ g'♯ d''♯ a'♯

This is the tuning adopted by 'l'Orphée de la France, Monsieur le Baillif', who was, according to Mersenne, one of

Della Prattica Musica, Naples (1601), Libro Quarto, p. 323.

Syntagma Musicum, Vol. II (1618), Tabella Universalis, p. 26.

Harmonie universelle (1636). Livre Quatriesme des Instrumens, Prop. X, p. 205.

This tuning is placed below the illustration of the instrument.

ibid., p. 207.

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the few exponents of the lyra in his country. Here the highest scale is given to the even-numbered strings, which now sound an octave above their fellows in the preceding example.

(5) Mersenne (1636). Eleven strings.¹

e^b e'^b b^b f c' g d' a e' b^b f'#

This is the Italian method, which was sent to Mersenne by le Sieur Hieronymo Landy after the chapter upon the lyra had been printed, but in time for it to be included in another part of the book. It may be compared to the tuning given by Cerreto, and from the two authors it would appear that the eleven-stringed instrument was characteristic of Italy.

Two points should be mentioned in connexion with these tunings. Praetorius, in his description of the lyra da gamba says:

Den etliche haben 12, etliche 14, etliche auch noch 2 ausserhalb des Kragens, und also 16 Saiten . . .²

which suggests that the bourdon pair were additional (and not inevitable), so that his fourteen strings in the *Tabellae Universalis* may require an octave pair added; yet he shows the last two notes as black semibreves in distinction to the other twelve notes. The other point is the pitch to which Mersenne tells us le Baillif tuned his second string, an octave higher than the normal top string of a bass viola da gamba—that is, to the pitch of the chanterelle of a treble viol. This must mean that the instrument was smaller, though he makes no mention of any change in size.³ He adds an afterthought to the description of the tuning sent by his Italian friend:

¹ *Harmonie universelle* (1636), p. 216.

² *Syntagma Musicum*, Vol. II, p. 4.

³ This pitch of d'' is, of course, out of all reason, even for the minikin of lute, upon such a length; yet Mersenne is usually so particular to indicate varieties of size. In any case, it is obvious that le Baillif's instrument, having fifteen strings, was fairly large; and exactly the same tuning for the lyra is given by Athanasius Kircher, *Musurgia Universalis*, Rome (1650), *Iconismus VII*, facing page 486 of Vol. I.

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Il faut seulement remarquer que la Lyre dont ie viens de discourir est à bras, comme les Violons, au lieu que la nostre est appellée iambe, parce qu'on la met entre les iambes pour en iouër.¹

It should be obvious that nothing suited to the pitch of Cerreto could be played like a violin; hence this is conclusive that the French type, with its higher pitch, was played like a viol. A clue to Mersenne's meaning is to be found in a passage in a rather later work, wherein we are told that when the Italians played 'la Basse de Violon, de la mesme espece que celle dont ou jouë en France', they held it 'sur le bras, au lieu qu'en France on l'appuye contre terre'.² The only possible explanation of this is that it was held, as we should say, 'across the knees', and this is borne out by pictorial records of this way of holding.³

It is easy to understand the value of the bass lyra in supporting with rich harmonies an orchestra or mass of voices, for, as Mersenne tells us, the essence of its use was that

en faut toucher trois ou quatre [chordes] en mesme temps vn mesme coup d'archet, afin de faire des accords.⁴

and he gives a vivid impression of its effect when he says,

Or le son de la Lyre est fort languissant & propre pour exciter à deuotion, & pour faire rentrer l'esprit dans soy-mesme; l'on n vse pour accompagner la voix & les recits.⁵

In the fragments given by Cerreto and Mersenne to illustrate the tablature, the lyra appears as supporting each note of the air with a full chord of from four to six notes,⁶ but

Harmonie universelle, Livre Quatriesme des Instrumens, p. 217.

Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la Viole* (1687), p. 9; see *infra*, p. 206.

See, for example, in *Musical Instruments in Pictures*, the 'Itinerant Musicians' by Offany (p. 152). Something of this sort, I take it, is what Ganassi warns his students against when playing the viols; see *supra*, p. 73.

Harmonie universelle (1636), p. 204.

⁵ *Ibid.*

Ibid., p. 207; and *Della prattica musica* (1601), p. 326; there appears to be misprint in the last note of the first bar in the latter.

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there are indications that the instrument was used for far more complex work, as when Praetorius says that upon it alle *Madrigalia* und *Compositiones*, sowol in *genere Chromatico*, als *Diatonico*, zuwege gebracht werden können.¹

Cerreto assures his students 'that if in the strokes they touch upon some other string, it will not matter provided the same concord is maintained. It is difficult, especially when playing on the middle strings, to avoid touching more than one string because the bridge is only slightly arched. The player must use a long stroke of the bow, both in the *tiré* and the *poussé*. Further, when playing a passage of notes of short time value either ascending or descending, the player must not leave the concord in which the passage begins; and up to four consecutive notes, ascending or descending, must be played upon a single stroke, but if there are more than four notes in a passage, ascending or descending, a fresh stroke must be taken for the fifth note'.²

From the same author we learn that the lyra had often to be used as a transposing instrument, owing to the difficulty of getting certain semitones; the note was either transposed a major third up or down, or else taken in its octave or fifteenth. This is explained by a table showing how to 'transpose the major imperfect concords'. But sometimes the defective note cannot be taken as in this example, and the transposition has to be to a minor third or its derivatives as shown in a table which follows, how to 'transpose the minor imperfect concords'.³

Further technical details of an analogous nature follow. Finally, he says that when making the *Tablature* of some concerted piece, it must be borne in mind that, when a solo part occurs, it is very difficult to touch a single string, so that

¹ Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, Vol. II (1618), p. 49.

² Scipione Cerreto, *Della prattica musica* (1601), pp. 324 et seq. This is a very free paraphrase.

³ *Ibid.*

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it is as well to include some other strings into the stroke, which will not have a bad effect. This, however, we are told to be left to the judgement of the player.¹

The illustrations of both Praetorius and Mersenne show the lyra da gamba with frets, and in this it differs from its smaller original; yet frets might have been postulated for it, by reason of its variable tunings and elaborate tablature.

Cerreto, in another part of his book, gives lists of famous performers of his day in Naples, arranged under their instruments, and for the lyra da gamba there are no less than seven masters mentioned.² How long the instrument survived in Italy and France it is impossible to say, for the mere absence of direct reference is no sure guide to its disuse after the middle of the seventeenth century. What do we know of the late use of the orpharion and bandora in England save by chance passing mentions, as those by Mace and Pepys? For what it may be worth, the lyra da gamba even finds description and illustration in an Italian book at the end of the first quarter of the eighteenth century.³

If much attention has been given to the lyra family, it is because it has for so long remained in an obscurity quite unwarranted by the important part it played in the musical life of at least two and a half centuries; and because some day a reader may be stimulated to curiosity for the recovery of the full history and practical music of these instruments.

Ibid.
Ibid., Libro Terzo, Cap. I, pp. 157, 158, and 160.

Filippo Bonanni, *Gabinetto Armonico*, Rome (1722). A curious volume, but not one upon which much evidential value is to be placed. The reference to the *Arci viola di lira* upon p. 586 of Adlung's *Anleitung*, 1st edition, 1758, may be taken as purely historical.

BOOK III

THE REBEC; THE VIOLIN FAMILY

PART I

THE REBEC

JPON our stage there now steps a figure differing in the widest possible way from those which have preceded it. However far the viol is separated from the lyra in technical and musical spirit, there is yet between them an appearance of distant affinity, since in both the resonant body is a box on the belly of which the nature of the vibrations is determined by a sound-post; and to this major resemblance must be added a secondary but important one, in the rounding of the sounding-board.¹

The instrument now to be considered takes us back at one side to the mythical tortoise or at least to that first and most obvious advance, of a membrane stretched flat over the hollow shell, beneath the strings. The shell becomes hollowed out of wood, or built of strips, and the tight skin is replaced by a thin wooden board; let the shell be elongated at one end and there we have a body to which strings may be attached for plucking or for bowing, respectively—the Mandora and the REBEC of the Middle Ages.

The rebec, held always upon the shoulder or against the chest, is one of the earliest bowed instruments. Certain illustrations of the tenth century show it with but one string, and in this form, with the name of lyra, it is found in the Blasius MS. of about 1200 in a design made familiar by frequent reproduction. Yet even at this period it is shown elsewhere with its three characteristic strings.² The most recent *infra*, p. 199.

From the evidence of manuscript illuminations, some authorities state that early rebecs had pairs of strings. No bowed instrument is known with double strings (except Perry's cither viol of about 1780) and these are a characteristic of the plucked instruments. In none of the designs quoted is there ever a bow associated with the instrument, which is undoubtedly a gittern or a mandora.

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casual glance at the religious art of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries will show how popular this instrument has become, yet no early example has come down to us and we must be content with specimens made when it had descended far in the social scale in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Contrasted with the richness of the pictorial information about the rebec is the poverty of written detail of its use as music. After the classification by Virdung in 1511, Agricola is almost the only other author in whose work it is certain that the rebec and no other is described; by the dates of Haerle (1532) and Lanfranco (1533) the incipient demand of the violin lay a claim to the instruments of which they speak, though whether there was truly a confusion between the two types is left for discussion in a later chapter. Later associations have led us to regard the rebec as an instrument of single size, but when Virdung speaks of 'dye cleyn geigen',¹ his plural is set in a context which indicates a family and this is amply demonstrated by the pictures of the *Discantus*, *Altus*, *Tenor*, and *Bassus* given by Agricola.²

The tuning for this set does not appear with entire certainty in the earlier edition of Agricola, but in the re-written version of 1545 we have a tuning stated definitely to be for both the 'Polischen und Kleinen onebundischen geigen'; of the Polish geigen we shall have more to say hereafter.

Discant	<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>a'</i>
Alto and	<i>c</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>
Tenor }			
Bass	<i>F</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>d</i> <i>a</i> ³

¹ Sebastian Virdung, *Musica getutscht*, Basle (1511), sig. B ii (verso). In Virdung is included his translator Nachtgall (1536).

² Martin Agricola, *Musica instrumentalis deutsch*, Wittemberg (1528-9), folio lvi (verso) and lvi (recto). The names *Bassus* and *Tenor* have been transposed in error, but this is corrected in the later edition of 1545.

³ *Ibid.*, Wittemberg (1545), folio 45 (verso) et seq. Although this is the c

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This fourth string in the bass is not shown in his illustrations of the rebec, but it receives support from Hans Gerle:

Nun folgt hernach wie du solt auff den Kleynen Geyglen lernen
e haben kein bundt uñ werden auch anderst gezogen dann die
ossen Geygen und haben den merern tayl nur drey sayten uñ
ben eben genug daran wiewol wann du wilt mit gesellen
ygen die vier stym So muss der bass vier saytten haben.¹

Gerle gives a full-page illustration of the rebec in this portion of his book and his directions for playing, particularly those relating to the use of the bow, indicate that there is no good reason to assume that he means any other sort of instrument. But the close association, shown by Agricola, between the rebecs and the Polish geigen may perhaps leave a lingering doubt. Gerle's picture is carefully drawn to show the highly arched bridge. He gives no notes for the tuning, stating that the top string of the tenor must be raised 'not too high and not too low' and that the treble is a fifth above the tenor and the bass an octave below the treble; the strings are a fifth apart throughout. Two pieces, each in four parts, are given. It will be seen that the feature of the rebec's tuning is, like that of the later violin, the fifth; and the relatively small size of the instrument as shown by Agricola is supported by its range and by its analogy with such instruments still in use in the East. Lanfranco makes a remark similar to that of Gerle about the fourth string on the bass, but here again it is not safe to assert dogmatically that, even in 1533, his 'Violetta da Braccio, & l'Arco: la quel medesimamente non ha tasti apparenti' means the rebec.² Praetorius, who shows a small rebec as one of the infinite tunings for the rebecs that I have found, it seems almost certain that the small popular instrument was tuned to a higher pitch, to judge by experiment upon modern copies. The confusion of its name with that of the violin suggests that the top three strings of that instrument may have had the pitch of the small rebec.

Hans Gerle, *Musica teusch*, Nuremberg (1532), sig. H₂ (verso); see also the pages immediately following.

Giovanni Maria Lanfranco, *Scintille di Musica*, Brescia (1533), p. 137.

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of his three pochettes, gives its tuning as an octave above that of the ordinary violin,¹ but his *Tabella Universalis* suggests that it is the top string which is lacking, so making the highest string in *a''* or *b''*. That diminutive violin, known as the dancing-master's kit, had an earlier counterpart in the little elongated rebec to which the name *poche*, or *pochette*, was given; but the word 'kit' occurs in English literature at least as early as the beginning of the sixteenth century, and apparently with the same connotation, and so a small rebec may even then have been in use.

With the exception of Hans Gerle, there is no concerted music for the rebecs at present known to us, and to-day practical interest is confined to the same use as that to which the discant instrument was put during the major portion of our period. Early in the sixteenth century the rebec had lost its prestige, though it held its place in the English court till the end of Henry VIII's reign; but it was as an instrument for jollity and dance, and therefore not a means to the serious music of the day. By the latter part of the sixteenth century its social position may be compared without injustice to that of the banjo to-day; but it was, like the banjo, of great value in its own sphere and for that reason its recovery is no mere antiquarian experiment. To understand this, it is necessary to consider the tone colour resulting from the construction of the rebec. In an early form, the instrument was used till recent years in Greece and the adjacent islands, and examples of this, compared with eighteenth-century Italian rebecs and pictorial records, have enabled facsimiles of the sixteenth-century rebec to be made, with a tone that cannot be far from the original. This tone is surprising and resembles neither viol nor violin, but has a snarling brilliance more akin to the chanter of a bagpipes;² this powerful and penetrating

¹ Michael Praetorius, *Sciagraphia*, Wolffenbüttel (1620), Col. xxi.

² A character in one of Molière's plays is described as being 'as dry as a rebec'.

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ating voice is a fit fellow to its unbiblical companions, the repent and the shawm, in music for dances, for example, which must stand out in clear-cut distinctness above other sounds. This character will explain its long popularity in country and village, as many literary references attest, until it was finally driven to extinction by the violin.¹

Almost the last survival of the rebec was the Dorsetshire mstrum, a flattish board of pear-like outline upon which our wire strings passed over a tin canister for sound-box: it lasted on until the opening of the nineteenth century, and the name will be familiar to readers of the poetry of William Barnes.

Originally the rebec had no finger-board, for the neck was only an extension of the table and the body; the Greek lyra of late times still retained this form. In Europe at some uncertain time the rebec began to evolve a finger-board,² and at the opening of the sixteenth century this had acquired the appearance of a step down in the upper part of the table, as though the instrument clung tenaciously to its original condition. Later in the century a true finger-board is shown, but the intermediate form is found even in specimens of the sixteenth century.

In its modern revival the short bow, with fixed hair kept taut between the ends of a well arched stick, has proved the most successful for obtaining the sharply accented notes of the dance music. Like the galoubet or three-holed vertical pipe of the old 'pipe and tabor' man, the rebec is used to-day in connexion with the vigorous rebirth of folk-dancing.

We have been told that the rebec, or something very like it, was made and used in Cumberland within living memory; and until recently it was certainly to be met with in out-of-the-way places in Spain.

Probably in the fifteenth century. In Fra Angelico's paintings it is still shown in the earlier state.

PART II

THE VIOLINS

CHAPTER I

THE VIOLIN IN THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY

§ i.

THE VIOLIN is unique amongst instruments for the vast literature devoted to its history and description. It is true that much of this is repetition and that there has been some misunderstanding about the earlier stages, but once the instrument has asserted itself with definition, more than enough has been said about makers and methods to render anything further upon those aspects needless here.¹ We may confine ourselves to a brief review of the possible factors in the generation of the violin and to a few practical details of its musical use within our period. The violin faces us with a problem different from that of any other of our subjects; for it is one of the very few important instruments of which it can be said that at a given date it was not at all, and that shortly afterwards it is found full fledged in active life.² And this date coincides with the beginning of our period.

§ ii.

One result of this datable genesis of the most ubiquitous of instruments has been the claim of patriotism to assign the honour of invention to a single place or country. If w

¹ In the selected bibliography of reference books given in Lütgendorff's first volume some five hundred and seventy works are quoted and these, except for about a dozen, are all studies written in the last hundred years.

² At the end of our period the pianoforte and the clarinet are examples of new forms.

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believed all, the places of its birth would be as many and scattered as the graves of the prophet *Hûd*.¹ For its later fame of craftsmen, North Italy has had strong supporters, but the French cause has also been argued with amplitude and learning, and other countries have found staunch defenders. England, which may be found to hold a strong place, has not received the treatment that is clearly deserved. It is no part of our programme to enter the lists upon any particular favour, and attention will be confined to signifying such items of evidence as seem tangible enough to assist the impartial.

Many words have been wasted over this matter by a failure to define clearly the limits of the subject. Here, this will be taken to mean an instrument, or a family of instruments, wherein the resonant body is composed by sound-board and back separated by ribs, fitted with four, or three strings of gut, tuned always a fifth apart, without frets upon the neck, and, the smaller instruments, played resting upon the shoulder or against the breast. To the evolution leading to the standard model we have nothing to say, for, even if desirable, that is not fundamental in the character of the instrument. This definition is not perfect, for it might be applied to some early stage of the *lyra da braccia* before that instrument acquired its full complement of strings and the surdons; but within our period it will serve, for during the sixteenth century there is no evidence of anything in use corresponding to the definition.

One difficulty in the way of research upon this subject is the lack of genuine examples of sixteenth-century instruments; for the searching examinations of those prized collections of a hundred years ago by Vidal, Hart, and others left them in even a worse case than did the attacks by Crowe and Cavalcaselle the paintings of Giorgione. Dr. Coutagne,

¹ An allusion filched from the prodigality of Charles Doughty.

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although he has a fish of his own to fry, is hardly exaggerating when he says:

En réalité les violons authentiques du *xv^e* siècle peuvent compter parmi les pièces rarissimes, disons même presque introuvables.¹

And the few specimens that are allowed as authentic belong to the second half of the century, almost without exception.

When the literary evidence of the youth of the violin is considered, there is very little that is to be used with certainty. In Viridung the small geige is unmistakably a rebec; Hans Gerle and Lanfranco are not definite. But when we read the two versions of Agricola's treatise, we find therein information of quite extraordinary interest and decision. In the issue of 1528-9 he describes the large geigen or viols with their five (and six) strings and typical intervals of tuning; this is followed by the use of four strings,

Die ander art auff grosse odder kleine Geigen welche allein mit vier Seyten erfunden und wie sie gestymmet sollen werden.²

And in this method of using either the large or the small geigen—observe that two distinct families are implied—the tuning is:³

Discantus	<i>g</i>	<i>c'</i>	<i>f'</i>	<i>a'</i>
Alto and	<i>c</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>d'</i>
Tenor }				
Bassus	<i>G</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>a</i>

This is still a portion of the viol tuning and differs from his own tuning of 1545 and from the practice described by Ganassi of using only four out of the six strings upon certain occasions.⁴ This is immediately followed by

¹ Henry Coutagne, *Gaspard Duiffoprout et les Luthiers lyonnais du XVI^e siècle* (1893), p. 55.

² Martin Agricola, *Musica instrumentalis deudsch* (1528), fol. xlvii (recto).

³ *Ibid.*, folio xlviii (verso).

⁴ See *infra*, p. 164.

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die dritte art von kleinen Geigen welche nür mit dreien Seyten gezogen und die quint Von einander gestymmet werden.¹

Of these, he says that they are smaller than those already described; they have only three strings and are usually (eigentlich) found without frets; it is difficult to play without frets and requires careful study, but you can learn it with frets at first and then, 'if you like, they can be cut off with a knife'.²

He gives illustrations of the four sizes, but shows them with frets. 'Vier kleine Geigen mit bünden und mit dreien Seyten.'³

The tuning is:⁴

Discant	<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>a'</i>
Alto and	}	<i>c</i>	<i>g</i>
Tenor			
Bass	<i>F</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>g</i>

Here is, then, an instrument described which possesses all the essential attributes of a violin. Several pages farther on, separated by the dulcimer, harp, and psaltery, there comes a brief description, with illustrations, of the rebecs and the omba marina, though the same name, 'kleinen Geigen', is used for the former; much the same remark is made about the difficulty of playing without frets, and similar advice is given about placing frets for learning and then cutting them off with a knife, 'as I have told you in connexion with the kleinen Geigen'.⁵ No tuning is given here for the rebecs.

In the edition of 1545 there are definite changes. The types

Musica instrumentalis deutsch (1528), fol. xlix (recto).

Ibid. The texts of all the passages referred to in this section are given in full Appendix II.

Ibid., fol. li (verso).

Ibid., fol. l (verso). This tuning is the same as that of Ganassi in 1543 (see *supra*, p. 170). Note that the setting of the voices corresponds to that of Lanfranco and Cerone, but differs, in the pitch of the bass, from Agricola's later edition of 1545 (see *supra*, p. 156).

⁵ *Ibid.*, fol. lv (recto).

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of geigen now become respectively the grossen or Welschen the Polischen, and the kleinen dreyseitigen Geigen. The word 'Welsch' has many meanings, being applied to Celtic, French, or Italians;¹ in the present context it undoubtedly indicates the type of viols in use in the Latin countries at that date. This distinction is first introduced when he gives instructions for the bowing which

man nent die welsche art

though his directions are not explicit as to the manner of holding the bow.² The only tuning he gives for 'der grosse welschen geigen' is for four strings, the bass having five, but these diagrams are intended chiefly to show the position of the fingering of the left hand. This tuning differs from that given in his earlier edition, but corresponds exactly to the arrangement given by Ganassi in 1543.

Descant	<i>g</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>e'</i>	<i>a'</i>	
Alto and Tenor	}	<i>c</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>d'</i>
Bass		<i>F</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>g</i>

Ganassi has four strings throughout and so avoids this curious extra interval of a third in the bass.³

After details of the fixing of the frets in the correct position there follows an important passage⁴ which may be freely paraphrased thus:

Further, I must tell you that there is another class of geigen which is common in Poland, wherein the strings are tuned in fifths and they are played in a different way from that previously described. The strings are stopped with the finger-nail. . . . I consider the

¹ Compare Hans Gerle's *Tabulatur auff die Laudten*, Nuremberg (1533), s. A ii recto 'Teutsche, Welsche un̄ Französische stück von liedlein'.

² *Musica instrumentalis deudsch* (ed. 1545), fol. 35 (recto).

³ *Regola Rubertina*, Vol. II (1543), Cap. XXII. See Appendix III.

⁴ *Musica instrumentalis deudsch* (ed. 1545), fol. 42 (verso).

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ve a 'viel subtiler' and more beautiful resonance than the Felschen type, but this is entirely a matter of opinion. It is necessary to stop with the finger-nail and not with the soft end of the finger, as that would tend to deaden the sound. . . . It is much more difficult to learn the fingering without frets, but there is no difficulty on earth that cannot be overcome with practice.

Although the passage had been headed
as fundament der Polischen Geigen und kleinen handgeiglein
speaks only of the first named; there is no picture, as in the
previous edition, of these instruments. This is followed
shortly by a section entitled

von den kleinen dreyseitigen handgeiglein¹

in which the more important part runs thus:

Yet it should be further noted that there exists another kind
of geigen tuned like the Polish type, in fifths, yet handled dif-
ferently, as will be explained later on. I suspect that people
understand very little about the use of the finger-board or neck,
which is the basis of the whole matter.²

After a humorous and punning interlude about his promise
being rather like a covered dish of food brought to expectant
and curious guests, he goes on to say that he is giving dia-
grams to explain clearly the fingering of these geigen without
frets.

For this purpose the diagrams are suitable for both the Polish
and the little geigen, except that the Polish players only hold
between the strings and grip with the finger-nails over the position
where the frets should stand.³

ibid., fol. 45 (recto).

Compare Ganassi. See Appendix III, *infra*, p. 246.

This passage gave me a vast amount of trouble to understand, though it is
really perfectly simple. So habituated does one get to a particular type of
technique—in this case, pressing the strings on a finger-board—that it was not
until I found that some Eastern musicians form the notes by the use of the
finger-nails alone, that the meaning of Agricola became obvious. This form

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Then come the 'three masterly figures' which show the position of the fingers in stopping 'the Polish and little unfretted geigen of which the strings are tuned in fifths'. The tuning given in these diagrams has already been quoted in our chapter on the rebec; the pictures of the rebecs follow these diagrams.

We need not pursue Agricola into further details; it is no speculation to see, in his Polish geigen of 1545, the three-stringed unfretted geigen tuned in fifths, of 1528, and it can therefore be stated with certainty that an instrument with all the characteristics of the violin was, by a German, especially associated with Poland in the early part of the sixteenth century; and that this is entirely unconfused with either the viols or the rebec.¹ To this we may here add the statement of Praetorius nearly a century later when he is distinguishing between the *viole da gamba* and the *viole da braccia*; the passage already quoted on page 34 continues:

Diese beyde Arten werden von den Kunstpfeiffern in Städten also unterschieden, dass sie die *Violn de gamba* mit dem Namen Violen, die *Violen de bracio* aber, Geigen oder Polnische Geigen nennen; Vielleicht daher, dass diese Art erstlich aus Polen herkommen seyn sol, oder dass daselbst den aussbündigen trefflichen Künstler uff diesen Geigen gefunden werden.²

Here is a definite tradition, associating the violin with Poland, in evidence in 1618. There are other factors that might be mentioned, such as the story told by Hawkins of the player³ from those parts who astonished Corelli; and the fact that Baltzar, the virtuoso who swept England with a technique unthought of in 1662, came from Lubeck. There is

of stopping notes is much more common than I had supposed; for example it is used on the Greek and Cretan lyra (rebec), where there is no finger-board.

¹ A possible illustration of a 'Polish geige' may be the instrument in the background of Mattias Grünewald's Isenheim altar-piece, mentioned *supra*, p. 74.

² Michael Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum*, Tom. II (1618), p. 44.

³ Nicolas Adam Strunck.

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o, that national fiddle of the Wends, the husla, resembling a three-stringed violin; how far back it goes is uncertain, but its form is archaic. Nor must it be forgotten that the Baltic provinces were little touched by the growing civilization of the rest of Europe until a late date; even after the evangelizing efforts of Henry the Lion, they lapsed again into complete barbarianism when that arch-ingrate died in 1195.

What precise meaning should be attached to Agricola's use of the word 'handgeigen' for the rebecs is obscure; Hans Gerle in 1532¹ gives instructions for learning the 'small geigen without frets' and, like Agricola, he tells his readers to start on frets at first, to ensure a correct intonation being learned, and that then these frets should be cut off;² this we have seen Agricola applying to both the Polish geigen and the rebecs; but it seems most likely that this section of Gerle's book, with its music, is intended for the latter family of instruments. Virdung's use of the expression 'small geigen' is unmistakably for the rebec.³

§ iii.

The life of the violin in both France and Italy before the middle of the sixteenth century is a thing of shadows, fit basis for the tomes that have been built on so treacherous a groundwork. According to your temperament you may be stirred or repelled by the patriotism and labour with which the cases for Gaspar da Salò, Duiffoprout, and others have been wrought since Schebeck disturbed the traditions of Italy with

Hans Gerle, *Musica teutsch* (1532), sig. H₂ (verso) et seq.

This sensible way of training beginners was general to at least the end of the sixteenth century (*vide* Playford). Our modern method, coupled with reliance on private practice, is about the most effective way ever devised for completely training a child's sense of intonation—as any student's concert proves. The original method was revived by Mr. Arnold Dolmetsch in 1918: see 'Old Ways New in Violin Teaching', *Musical Times*, Feb. 1926.

Sebastian Virdung, *Musica getutscht*, 1511, sigs. B₂ and B₃ (recto).

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his German claim in 1875. The battle has been fought—is, indeed, still going on—by Niederheitmann, Coutagne, Vidal, Strocchi, Livi, Rho-Guerrieri, Butturini, and numerous others; and many of these writers have founded their work upon the impossible assumption that the whole credit for the discovery of the violin may be attributed to one man. Nothing is more dangerous to precise discussion of this subject than the debating on names, where meaning is not definite and beyond all question of opinion. So that it is no help to be told that many cases occur in France of the use of the word *violon* before 1550, even back to a case in Lorraine in 1490;¹ or that *violino* is very rare in Italian before that date.² For *violon* is a curious word philologically and the meaning of *violino* is uncertain even up to the end of the sixteenth century in Italy; as early as 1462 there is a use of the word *violinista* in Perugia, where it is used as alternative to lute- or vihuela-player.³ As we have already noted, those early sixteenth-century violins that were once the pride of collectors are now all thoroughly discredited.

The passage in Lanfranco's book of 1533 quoted previously speaks only of the 'Violetta da Arco senza tasti' or the 'Violetta da Braccio, & da Arco'; each member of this family has three strings, except the bass, which has four; they are tuned in fifths throughout, but no pitch is given. The relation of

¹ A. Jacquot, *La Musique en Lorraine* (1882), p. 23.

² Signor Federico Sacchi decided in 1891, after much labour, that no case existed before 1562; he was promptly capped by Dr. Gerolamo Biscaro, who gave two cases, from intermedi, of 1551 and 1552 respectively. (See *Gazzetta musicale di Milano*, Oct. 1891 and Jan. 1892.)

³ The entry was first published by Signor Rossi in the *Giornale di erudizione artistica*, Vol. V (1874), and is worth repeating for the confirmation it gives of the relationship of lute, bowed viol, and plucked vihuela.

Cum Magister Franciscus florentinus, Quittarrista seu Violinista et Cantarinus fuerit conductus per M.D.P. et cum predicto tempore iam finito ac canendum seu cantandum cum dicta viola seu quittarra ystorias antiquas et modernas . . .

Compare this with the passage from Tinctoris mentioned on p. 108.

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the three voices corresponds exactly to that given in 1613 by Verone for the *viola da braccia*.

Whatever one would like to think, it is impossible honestly to say whether Lanfranco means rebecs or violins; the following passage from Zacconi shows that the *Scintille di Musica* was still respected sixty years after its appearance:

... De gl'altri Istrumenti poi come le Viole tanto da braccio come da gambe, Violini: & altri, si può guardar nel fin del libro Gio: Maria Lanfranco, ilquale distintamente insegna come aschedun s'accorda: . . .¹

Unfortunately this does not settle the question for us, as the only bowed instruments with which Lanfranco deals are the consort viols, the *lyra da braccia*, and the 'violetta'; and, as will shortly be seen, at the end of the century it is by no means certain that 'violini' means 'violins'.

Another reference is found, in Ganassi, in which a like ambiguity clouds our knowledge. The title-page of his second volume promises amongst other things an 'accommodation' of the viols for those who play the '*viola senza tasti*'.² This promise is fulfilled in his twenty-third, and last, chapter, which follows the directions for using the viols with four rings only, a practice found useful to some, as the two upper rings are liable to break on the six-stringed instrument.³ The following is an approximate translation, whereof the original is given in the Appendix:

Method of tuning and playing with only three strings.
After you have learned how to tune and to play with only four strings you must be able to tune the viol with only three strings. . . . This tuning for the three strings only, each tuned a fifth above

Lodovico Zacconi, *Prattica di Musica*, Venice (1592), fol. 217 (verso).
Silvestro Ganassi, *Regola Rubertina*, Vol. II, Venice (1543). (Title-page) . . .
ancora lo accordar ditto violone con la diligentia conveniente in diverse maniere et accomode ancora per quelli che sonano la *viola senza tasti* . . .
ibid., Chap. XXII. See Appendix III.

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the other will be the tuning which players of the *viola da brazzo senza tasti* will be able to use in their own way.¹

The tuning given in his diagram on the adjacent page agrees with that of Agricola in 1528:

Cants	<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>a'</i>
Tenor	<i>c</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>
Bass	<i>F</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>g</i>

Passing references to '*le viole con tre corde senza tasti*' are not infrequent in the general musical literature around the middle of the sixteenth century, and these are invariably set in a context by which is implied something utterly familiar to the reader.² Was the violin sufficiently general then to have been intended? It may have been; but we know with certainty that the rebec was a common object. Ganassi has spoken elsewhere of the *lyra*, but he makes no use in either of his volumes of the word '*rebec*' or any of its variations; hence we are in a position of uncertainty as to his intentions.

The quotation made in a previous chapter from the book by Philibert Jambe de Fer, published in Lyons in 1556³ is similarly discounted as evidence by the fact that the word *violon* was found in use in 1490, a date at which the most strenuous patriot is hardly likely to postulate a violin in France.

§ iv.

In all discussions upon the early life of the violin, it must be remembered that before the latter part of the sixteenth

¹ Silvestro Ganassi, *Regola Rubertina*, Vol. II, Venice (1543), Chap. XXIII. See Appendix III for original, and complete translation.

² For example, see the discussion upon intervals on instruments in Book V. Cap. LXVI of *L'Antica Musica*, Rome (1555), by Don Nicola Vicentino (whom we shall meet later in connexion with his *Archicembalo*).

³ See *supra*, p. 67, and footnote. It is possible that this book may contain material which would define the author's intention. Should any reader have access to a copy, I should be grateful for details. I understand, however, that he speaks of four strings on his *violons*, so that they are very likely violins.

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century it rarely found its use out of the hands of the lowlier ranks of musicians, those 'strolling players' whom in French literature we meet in the names of rebequets, taborins, and menestriers. Hence the absence or paucity of artistic and literary references in this period cannot be set down for negative evidence. Yet, if pictures do not show us a true violin in this period, they have preserved other records in which we may see the projection of the instrument. From the Italian art of a half-century two examples may be selected, typical of the nature of such glimpses. A painting by Ercole dei Roberti, who died in 1496, shows a group of two singers and a lute player standing behind a table upon which lie music books and two instruments; one of the latter a recorder, the other a small rectangular stringed instrument with its bow. It is minutely depicted with four strings, frets, and no bouts; and the end is so shaped that if played overarm it could only have been held against the breast. The other work is part of a fresco by Gaudenzio Ferrari¹ (died 1546), an artist who especially delighted in the display of music; in a considerable group of putti playing shawms, recorders, rebecs, and other instruments, one infant is seen holding upon its right shoulder almost a real violin, four strings being carried to a head of the typical lyra pattern.² The Vienna collection possesses a violin, apparently all in original state, of which the body is very similar in outline to the one played by Gaudenzio's cherub, though the latter has holes and the former the *C* pattern of the viols; but the head of the Vienna instrument is of a normal peg-box and scroll

I select these as they are easy of reference in *Musical Instruments in Pictures*, pp. 57 and 65 respectively. The Ercole is in the National Gallery, London, and the Gaudenzio at Bergamo.

There is a suspicious-looking instrument in the hand of the angel in Melozzo da Forlì's fresco in the Sacristy of St. Peter at Rome; see *ibid.*, p. 42: da Forlì died in 1494. And I have seen what looked very like a three-stringed violin in a Dutch picture by J. Cornelisz of Amsterdam, c. 1520.

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type. A date 'about 1500' has been assigned to this specimen, but this, being purely speculative, is inadmissible as evidence. If, however, the authenticity of its original condition is established beyond all doubt—a difficult enough problem—it may stand as perhaps the oldest violin surviving to-day.

Finally, we must consider the famous and much dissected portrait of Duiffoprout engraved by Pierre Wœriot de Bouzey and dated 1562. All that need be said here is that in this picture the four-stringed violin is unmistakably shown. The fact that the sides turn in to the neck from the shoulders, like Ganassi's viols, and that the sound holes are C-shaped, cannot disguise the true nature of the instrument.

§ v.

To attempt to establish any precise theory when the certain data are so attenuated is impossible. With safety we can only say that in Italy during the first half of the sixteenth century something having the appearance of the violin is shown, and that at least one reference speaks of a practice of using a violin with three strings tuned in fifths to suit those who are accustomed to play upon the 'viola da braccio senza tasti'. In the middle of this century a violin is certainly in use in France. In Poland something which was in all essentials a violin was in general use at the beginning of the century and this was specifically associated with that country; in the seventeenth century this association is found applied to the real violin. Finally, the Wends have a national fiddle of similar character, but it has yet to be proved how far this instrument is indigenous.

It is possible that future researches into the musical past of the Slav nations may bring to light valuable evidence. Poland was a more important musical influence in Europe at this period than is often remembered, and though of her composers, those associated with choral music, such as

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zamotulski and Lirowczyk, are best known, there is evidence of a powerful school of instrumental workers throughout the whole of the century.¹ In our own Elizabethan volumes, as in French, Italian, and Spanish works of the period, there is often to be found a piece noted as 'Polish ayre'. The nation had the closest intercourse with the rest of Europe, and in the second half of the century the presumptive successor to the French King was willing to sacrifice his prospects for the throne of Poland.²

The musical activities of the Scandinavian countries throughout this period are all too little known, but there is no reason to assume that they can be ignored. Denmark, indeed, had at her court the greatest of all lutenists; and thence evolved that highly individual violin school to which Grieg was later to be so indebted?

Dr. Coutagne has brought forward a mass of evidence to show that Lyons had a vigorous and varied industry of instrument making before 1550, but that it seemed to have suffered a decline by the end of the century; elsewhere, there is evidence of a sharp recovery during the next hundred years. What is true of Lyons was probably true of the rest of France, for we have seen in an earlier chapter what may have been the rebirth of her school of violists in the first quarter of the seventeenth century.

Researches into the original home of the violin have been, in the past, too preoccupied with the centres of its later fame; in looking back into that misty sunrise, we must guard against the temptation to give to that evanescence a character based solely upon the distinct ground near to hand.

See the earlier chapters of Opienski's book, referred to *supra*, p. 97.

An unfortunate choice, from the consequences of which the Poles were well delivered when Henri broke his vows and returned to France to usurp his younger brother's crown.

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CHAPTER II THE ANCESTORS

§ i.

THE battle for the motherland of the violin has been upon well-defined ground; the same cannot be said for the much wider controversy aroused by the genealogical search for instrumental ancestors. It should, however, be emphasized that such a search may be quite needless—that when the violin appeared in Europe early in the sixteenth century it had already been, somewhere, as well established as the rebecs, lyras, and viols, and that therefore, as far as Europe is concerned, it was as fatherless as Melchisedec; it just happened. If the Polish or Slav origin becomes some day proved and accepted, this must be the position until musical evolution in those distant parts has been worked out.

But in the present state of knowledge it will not do to wriggle out of the problem in so easy a fashion; whatever Poland gave to the rest of Europe, the possibility must be faced of a separate discovery within our period in some Latin country. Although we deal only with immediate influences, reference may here be made to the series of evolutionary designs in the *Utrecht Psalter* from which, as Miss Schlesinger has ably shown, the direct descent of the fretted vihuela from the Roman cithara may be deduced, so preserving for the viols a strictly European origin.¹ Beyond this, the workings of the Dark Ages are too uncertain for statements, other than pure speculation, to be made.

¹ Kathleen Schlesinger, 'The Utrecht Psalter', *Musical Antiquary*, October 1910 (see pp. 32 and 33). I cannot, however, endorse Miss Schlesinger in all the lines of evolution that appear to her so obvious in this article.

THE ANCESTORS

§ ii.

The candidates for the parentage of the violin, as an invention of the turn of the fifteenth century, are three: the rebec, the lyra, and the viol. Of these, custom has assigned the term 'ancestor' to the last named, but here it must be said categorically that there is not the slightest musical relationship between the viol and the violin; they differ at every point and most of all in the fundamental points of tuning and of frets. Moreover, it is not usual for an unchanged ancestor to run side by side, not in decadence but in growing power, for two hundred years with a vigorous offspring! And close acquaintance with the music of the two families makes the idea even more preposterous.

As between the lyra and the rebec, the choice is delicately balanced; both instruments possess strong negative factors, yet both supply matter of close affinity, the one in form and the other in spirit. The lyra has a body which corresponds in fundamentals to that of the violin and it is held overarm; the interval of the fifth is prevalent between its strings. Against this must be set the number of the strings and their arrangement, with the presence of the bourdons; and our slight knowledge of the use of the lyra postulates a very flat bridge to assist the bowing of two or more strings at once, with a long bow for smooth unaccented playing. Of the tone-colour we are at present ignorant. In the rebec there is the typical straightforward tuning in fifths and a sharply rhythmic use in single airs, exactly of the same musical atmosphere in which the violin had all its early associations. Yet in tone-colour it differs widely and the cause of this is in the construction, for the round body and flat belly cannot be connected by a sound-post and act upon radically different principles from those of the lyra. So basic is this structural difference¹

¹ See the discussion on this point, *infra*, pp. 199 et seq.

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that, despite the early similarity of musical use, one might be tempted to dismiss the rebec altogether, were it not that its name became so entangled with that of the violin. Thus in Praetorius we find:

VIOLN DE BRACIO

Viola, Viola de bracio: Item, Violino da braccio; Wird sonsten eine Geige, vom gemeinen Volck aber eine Fiddel unnd daher de bracio genennet, dass sie auf dem Arm gehalten wird.

Deroselben Bass-, Tenor-, und Discantgeige (welche *Violino* oder *Violetta picciola*, auch *Rebecchino* genennet wird) seynd mit 4 Saiten . . . und werden alle durch *Quinten* gestimmt.¹

When Bottrigaro is discussing the relations between the octave subdivision upon 'strumenti stabili e strumenti al tutto alterabili', the words 'violino' and 'viola da braccio' are nowhere used, but in each place where one of them would be expected, he speaks of 'Ribechino'.² There is a passage in Cerone where at first sight the rebec and violin appear together:

Finalmente los instrumentos de arquillo, son las Lyras, las Vihuelas de arco, los Violones, y los Rabeles ò Rebequines. Otros ay q̃ se tañen con punta de dedos, como los Laudes, las Harpas, y las Teorbas.

But this is not the only passage in his final book where his gains, ill gotten from Zacconi, seem not to have prospered. There is obvious redundant mention of viols; and, while *Rabel* is used for *violino* elsewhere, he once uses the expression 'el rebequin ò violino'.⁴ His usual method of grouping is 'las Vihuelas, los rabeles, etc. . . .' obviously following Zacconi's 'le viole, i violini . . .'.

¹ *Syntagma Musicum*, Vol. II (1618), Cap. XXII, p. 48 (see also p. 4).

² *Il Desiderio*, Venice (1594). See, for examples, pp. 3, 5, and 40 of the edition of 1599.

³ *El Melopeo*, Naples (1613), Lib. XXI, Chap. II, p. 1039.

⁴ I think only once; but I confess to having given close attention only to part of this enormous work, in which there are nearly 1,200 closely-printed folio pages. This passage occurs on p. 259.

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On the whole, perhaps, the lyra gave the more to the conception of the violin, but the musical spirit of the rebec must be accorded its share.

§ iii.

We have mentioned the use of 'rebecchino' for violin; inference may now be made to a possible converse of the change of names. Cerone more than once uses 'Rabeles ò violinos' for something different from the vihuelas, either 'de braço' or 'de arco'; and this, if not intended for the treble violin, can hardly have been anything but the rebec.¹ Zacconi does not use the word 'rebec' at all, but speaks of 'le viole, le Liri, i Lironi, & i Violini'²; but the words 'le Viole', is particular to point out,³ mean two sorts, 'le Viole da braccio, & le Viole da gamba', and it certainly looks as though his use of 'Violino' was for some other instrument, for which there is only the rebec, unless, as suggested above, the treble violin was meant. This is emphasized in his last chapter, upon the compass of instruments, where he speaks first of the 'Violini', then of the viole da gamba and the viole da braccio; of the latter he says:

le Viole da braccio perche s' accordano con gl' ordini del violino, & esso Violino accordandosi di quinta in quinta . . .⁴

Finally, in a modern Portuguese dictionary there will be found 'rabel' for 'rebec', while all words connected with the violin, its bow, and its use, will be found to be compounded 'rebeca'.⁵

¹ e.g. pp. 1040, 1063. But see *infra*, p. 182, for discussion on this point.

² *Prattica di Musica*, Venice (1592), Lib. IV, Chap. XL, fol. 213 (recto).

³ *ibid.*, fol. 217 (recto). 'Questo nome ch'abbraccia due cose, & che ha bisogno di esser diuiso & distinto : non è altro che il nome della Viola : quando si suona la Viola da braccio, & la Viola da gamba.'

⁴ *ibid.*, fol. 218 (recto).

⁵ Michaelis, *Novo Dictionario*, 1920, Part II, p. 715. e.g. violin bow—*arco da viola*.

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It is yet another example of the need for caution when dealing with names alone, amongst the records of that period of change. The matter is not entirely settled even by the German-Italian dictionary of Praetorius¹ when he gives:

Klein oder Discant-Geig <i>Tenor</i>—Alt Geige, und alle Geigen, welche man uffm Arm helt, Discant- und Bass- geigen, werden in gemein genennet.	<i>Ribecchino. Violino. Fidicula</i> } <i>Viole de braccio</i> <i>Viole da braccio</i>
--	---

for the Discant-geige appears in both terms; and what has become of the rebec proper in all these writers, if it is not meant by 'rabel', 'rebequin', 'ribecchino', and 'violino'?

Cerreto nowhere mentions the rebec or the viola da braccia. In the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth chapters of the twenty-first Book of *El Melopeo*, where concerted music for instruments is discussed, the 'rabels' and the 'vihuelas da arco' are introduced, but no reference is made to the 'vihuelas da braço'.

CHAPTER III

EARLY TUNINGS OF THE VIOLIN FAMILY

§ i.

INSTRUMENTS surviving from the beginning of the seventeenth century show that in design and size, and therefore in pitch, the familiar standards had already been achieved. But it will be profitable to examine briefly the evidence given by Zacconi and by Cerone of the use of the *Viole da braccia* at the close of the sixteenth century in Italy.

¹ *Syntagma Musicum*, Vol. III (1619), p. 122 (misprinted 142).

THE EARLY TUNINGS

n endeavour to deduce the meanings of these authors, unaided by any preconceived ideas, has led the writer through a labyrinth of doubt, and though he has emerged with conclusions not unlike orthodox expectations, the process brings to light many curious factors.

To begin with Zacconi, who writes in Venice in 1592, we have seen already that he speaks of *violini* as something distinct from *viole da braccia*; his final chapter¹ deals with the ranges of instruments, and the first of the bowed instruments mentioned is the *violino*, which, he says, has a range of *voci*, beginning in *C fa ut* and going to *A la mi re*. He adds that, with this range, as with those he gives for the *viole da gamba* and the *viole da braccia*, players by their art and judgement can go beyond his upper limits. Now this range for the *violino* is not seventeen *voci* but twenty, and does not agree with the diagram which follows, wherein the *violino* is given a range of seventeen tones from *G sol re ut* to *B fa ♯ mi*; the imitation of this passage in Cerone,² both description and diagram agree with the latter. If this *violino* had four strings, a point upon which neither writer informs us, then the tuning would be precisely that of the violin to-day. The balance of evidence points to the *C fa ut* in Zacconi's description being an error. Cerone in his description calls this *Rabel* or *violino* and in his diagram 'Rabel'.

Unlike Cerone, Zacconi does not give separate sections on the tuning of instruments, but in the passage under consideration he says definitely that the *viole da gamba* have six strings and the *viole da braccia* four strings. After speaking of the range of the *viole da gamba*—and it must be remembered that both these writers speak in terms of that pitch about which an earlier chapter has confessed

¹ Lodovico Zacconi, *Prattica di Musica*, Venice (1592), fol. 218 recto.

² Pedro Cerone, *El Melopeo*, Naples (1613), p. 1063.

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doubt—he says that ‘the viole da braccia are tuned in the same sequence as the Violino, which is tuned from fifth to fifth’.

The relation of the three sizes of the viole da braccia is then given, thus: the more bass (*piu basso*) string of the Soprano is to be in unison with the top string (*sopran*) of the Bass, and this same string of the Bass is to be in unison with the second string of the Tenor. The range of the tenor is from *A la mi re* to *F fa ut*; the bass has a range from *D la re* to *B fa ♯ mi* (which puts its top string correctly in unison with the second of the tenor).¹ He has here a rather cryptic remark:

il Basso perche s' accorda col Soprano il suo piu basso suono che possi formare (parlando della Viole ordinaire);

which Cerone translates bluntly as ‘the Bass is tuned a Octave below the Treble’;² but, however well this applies to the viole da gamba, nothing in these two writers gives the last arrangement to the viole da braccia.

The results from Zacconi would be to give us a tuning as follows:

Violino		<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>a'</i>	<i>e''</i>
Viole da Braccia	{ Soprano	<i>c</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>a'</i>
	{ Tenor	<i>F</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>
	{ Bass	<i>BB♭</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>g</i>

The extreme interest of this result is that we have here the complete violin family, including the true tenor, of which we shall presently speak, and the bass tuned to the pitch used in England and France in the seventeenth century.

¹ I hope I have made sense out of a very elusive passage (Lib. 4, Cap. LV). Before leaving Zacconi, I must record my respect for his excellent chapters on singing (Lib. I, Caps. LXI to LXXX).

² ‘Mas el Baxo, porque se templa en Octaua graue con el Tiple.’

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§ ii.

When we examine Cerone, writing in Naples in 1613,¹ we find a harking back to earlier ideas, in his section on the tuning of the *viole da braccio*:

Del modo de temprar la Vihuela de braço, y sin trastes.

Vihuela de braço (llamada comunmente Violeta, que es sin trastes) si es de las ordinarias, solo de tres cuerdas (saluo el Baxo, que tiene quatro) se compone: las quales cuerdas se templan de quinta en Quinta:²

He then gives a diagram, but explains that it is not put in any key because the player can tune it to whatever pitch he requires:

Tiple ³	Tenor	Baxo	
o			
o	o		
o	o	o	
	o	o	
		o	
		o	

Assuming the bass tuned as with Zacconi (and as, indeed, Cerone later on indicates), this would give us:

Tiple	<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>a'</i>
Tenor	<i>c</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>
Baxo	<i>BB♭</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>c</i> <i>g</i>

Tradition has it that he wrote most of the work in Spain, but it is strongly coloured with Italian ideas: J. E. Matthew says that nearly the whole of the tune was lost in a shipwreck.

El Melopeo, Lib. XXI, Cap. XVIII, p. 1057.

In the diagram as printed, the top note of the treble is given upon the line above the note as here shown: this I take to be a misprint.

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But, in his description of ranges, Cerone gives to the tenor the same range as does Zacconi, whom he is here obviously using. As both these writers use an advance of a fifth upon the open top string in calculating their ranges¹—both with the proviso that experienced players exceed this—it is necessary to allow four strings to Cerone's *rabel ò violino*; so that with an extra bass string also upon the tenor and treble, his results would be precisely the same as those from Zacconi.

The use of the word 'violeta' for the treble viola da braccia should be noted. As the seventeenth century advanced it became the practice to limit the term viola da braccia to the alto member of the violin family, whence our modern use of the truncated form viola.² But the name Violetta also survived for this instrument; thus Daniel Merk, having given the tuning for the violin (as to-day) proceeds:

Die Stimm darzu wird genennet Violetta, oder Viola prima vel secunda, auch soprano viola, auch Cantus, Französisch Haute Contre.³

His tuning is the ordinary *c* to *a'*.

In passing, it should be noted that Zacconi, in one place, speaks of the treble viola da gamba as 'violetta picciola', and is followed by Cerone with 'violeta chica'; this, however, appears to be merely description and not nomenclature.

§ iii.

Although the net result of the investigation of the two Italian publications is to bring us back to a point from which the plain man might have started, it will have emphasized

¹ An exception is the treble of the viole da gamba, where an octave on the top string is allowed.

² And, of course, the German term 'bratsche'.

³ Daniel Merk, *Compend. musicae chelicae* (1695), fol. A4 (recto). The word violetta, for the alto violin, is seen in numerous volumes of concertos of the eighteenth century; e.g. Alberti (c. 1730), C. Ph. E. Bach (1745), Richter (1772) Veichtner, (1775); and J. S. Bach's scores.

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the striking fact: the *violino* of Zacconi and the *babel ò violino* Cerone seem to their minds to be sharply divided from the *viola da braccio*. Now normal violins of this period exist today to show that the instrument was then in use and hence, after all, it, and not the rebec, may be implied by the terms noted. But the separation calls for some explanation that by no means obvious. If the treble violin was evolved or produced alone, the recognition of its distinctive character may have called for the construction of other sizes to have a family, after the custom of the times, corresponding to the human voices; and the later members, being widely separated in time, and being more comparable in size throughout to the viols,¹ received an appellation after the latter. It must be remembered that we are discussing only rather isolated evidence; the complete absence of any such distinction in Praetorius offers a striking contrast.

§ iv.

There are but few notes to add upon the early tunings of the violin family. Praetorius, who lumps together everything, from the double-bass to the kit or pochette, as *Viole de Braccio*: *gen*, gives the following:²

Little Discant	<i>c'</i>	<i>g'</i>	<i>d''</i>	<i>a''</i>	
Discant or Violino	<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>a'</i>	<i>e''</i>	
Tenor	<i>c</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>a'</i>	
Bass	<i>F</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>	
	<i>C</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>a</i>	
Gross quint Bass	<i>FF</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>a</i>

Here we find the *violino piccolo* which Bach was to use later with such effect. The tenor corresponds to the treble viola

treble viols are often found converted to 'violas', to which pitch they are notable.

Antagmæ Musicum, Vol. II (1618), *Tabella Universalis*, p. 26.

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da braccia of the Italians and to the alto of to-day. The two tunings for the bass are obviously for different sizes of instruments and the upper is a true tenor in the family; note that the bass proper is tuned to the notes accepted to-day, whereas mostly we shall find that the Italian pitch, one tone lower throughout, is being adopted at this period. Of the double-bass we shall speak later, as also of the three-stringed kits and pochettes.

It comes, however, as a distinct shock to find a writer, in 1618, saying that the violin family is so universally known that he need not bother to say anything about them.¹

§ v.

The family of violins used in France in the first quarter of the seventeenth century contained not four voices, but five, and Mersenne is exact in his descriptions of these instruments as used by the 'vingt-quatre Violons du Roy'. The parts are le Dessus, la Cinquiesme, la Haute-Contre, la Taille, and la Basse, and he particularly says that 'les parties du milieu sont de diferentes grandeurs'.²

His treble, or dessus, is tuned to the usual four notes with the top string in *e''*, and the whole of his series runs in a direct sequence of fifths, so that his bass,³ like that of the Italians, falls into

BB♭ F c g

and thus we are left with only two different sets of fifths for the three internal voices. These two sets are, as with the Italians and Praetorius,

<i>c</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>a'</i>
<i>F</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>

¹ *Syntagma Musicum*, Vol. II (1618), p. 48.

² Marin Mersenne, *Harmonie universelle* (1636), Livre Quatriesme des Instruments, Prop. I (p. 180).

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 179, 181, 184, and 185.

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out Mersenne, with all his garrulity, omits any mention of how they are used. It is from the merest chance remark, near the end of his section, that we learn that the three are a l'vnison';¹ but as to which set they are tuned he is dumb. The example in five parts which illustrates the use of the violins does not descend below *c* in the Taille and rises to *e*" in the Cinquiesme, and the alto tuning is obviously the more probable; it was, however, unlike the times to have no separate tenor tuning, and this evidence alone is not sufficient to deny it in French music of the period.

Reference to the double-bass is made only obliquely in the following passage, with its interesting provenance:

Or l'on pourroit adiouster vne sixiesme partie vne Quinte plus bas pour vne seconde Basse, à la façon de Lorraine.²

He mentions a difference in nomenclature between 'les Musiciens ordinaires' and 'les vingt-quatre Violons du Roy' that is worth recording for assistance in interpreting contemporary documents; in fact, Mersenne himself uses the ordinary system in the French version of his book, and the Court system in the Latin version. In order of size the instruments are named thus:³

Ordinary	Court
Dessus	Dessus.
Quinte, or Cinquiesme	Haute-Contre, or Haute-Contre Taille.
Haute-Contre	Taille.
Taille	Quinte, or Cinquiesme.
Basse	Basse.

The first English work to specify the tuning for the violin was John Playford's popular *Introduction to the Skill of Musick*,

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 198.

² *Ibid.*, p. 179.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 189. Mersenne himself has got a little confused in this passage, but his meaning is clear on reference to *Harmonicorum Instrumentorum, Liber Primus* (1636), pp. 40, 41, and 42.

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but the violin tutor did not appear in the first two issues. Even as late as the edition of 1674 he speaks only of the treble violin, tuned in the usual manner, but soon after that he amended the tutor to include the tenor and bass, tuned thus:¹

Tenor	<i>c</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>d'</i>	<i>a'</i>
Bass	<i>BB♭</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>c</i>	<i>g</i>

so agreeing with the French and Italians. There is, fortunately, much earlier evidence of this bass tuning in England, in music for the violin family which has been recently brought to light. That this tuning was well recognized is shown by the reference to it in Daniel Merk's little booklet, where he gives the notes and calls it the French bass with four strings.² There seems no direct evidence as to exactly when and where it was abandoned in favour of the slightly higher pitch; in England the old pitch had certainly become obsolete in the early eighteenth century, for in 1725 we read:

As to the *Harpsicord*, I have already observed there are a few very compleat ones that reach down to a *Tredecime* lower than double C below, the same with the lowest Note upon the *Bass-Violin*.³

CHAPTER IV

THE VIOLIN ON THE CONTINENT

WHEN Cerone is distinguishing between the two species of vihuela, he tells us that those 'de piernas (llamadas vulgamente Vihuelas de arco)' are so called because they are held between the legs when playing, while the other type is called 'de braços' because the player of these has to stand upon his feet; he adds that the sound of the latter is much more acute than 'las otras', but that because these 'de arco'

¹ John Playford, *An Introduction to the Skill of Musick*, 1687, p. 108.

² Daniel Merk, *Compendium musicae instrumentalis chelicae* (1695), sig. C3.

³ J. F. De La Fond, *A New System of Music*, 1725, p. 165.

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re 'mas cumplidas y mas perfectas' they are used for concerted playing, to which their tone is more suited than that of the 'vihuelas de braço'.¹ He repeats this when leading from the tuning of the vihuelas de braço to that of the viols:

Remos agora sucessiuamente de las otras, llamadas comunmente vihuelas de arco; que son las mas vsadas en los concertas.²

Zacconi, speaking of the 'piu soaue harmonia' of the viola da gamba, says something very like an original, as we should expect, of Cerone about their greater suitability for concerted music, adding that the composer must adopt the type of 'viola' best suited to his purpose.³ Soon after the opening of the seventeenth century, Italian composers had begun to turn their attention to the violin family for concerted music, and several dance suites of this period have come down to us;⁴ it is important to note that these are for the complete set of voices, including the true tenor. The violin, for solo work, received considerable attention also.⁵ André Maugars, in his description of Italian music which he sent from Rome in 1639, makes several mentions of the use of the violin in the churches. In one place he heard 'a violin played in the true chromatic mode; and although it seemed harsh to my ear at first, I nevertheless got used to the novelty and took extreme pleasure in it'. This suggests that all those interminable discussions upon scales and intervals, with which the weary student of the sixteenth century is apt to become impatient, are not mere theorizings.

It was in France, however, that the first outburst of real enthusiasm for an instrument of quasi-respectability got into

Il Melopeo (1613), Lib. XXI, Cap. VII, p. 1043. See also Cap. XXII (1662).

Ibid., p. 1058.

g. those by Allegri, 1618.

g. the Canzoni of Ucellini (1649) with advanced positions and double-stoppings.

³ *Prattica di Musica* (1592), fol. 217 (recto).

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print. Mersenne seems to have been carried away by those characteristic tricks of the violin which appeal so readily to the more superficial emotions and which were then being exploited by men like Bocan and Lezarin.¹

Et ceux qui ont entendu les 24. Violons du Roy, aduoüent qu'il n'ont iamais rien ouy de plus rauissant ou de plus puissant: de là vient que cet instrument est le plus propre de tous pour faire danser, comme l'on experimente dans les balets, & par tous ailleurs. Or les beautez & les gentillesses que l'on pratique dessus sont en si grand nombre, que l'on le peut preferer à tous les autres instrumens, car les coups de son archet sont par fois si rauissans que l'on n'a point de plus grād mescontentement que d'en entendre la fin, particulièrement lors qu'ils sont meslez de tremblemens & des flattemens de la main gauche, qui contraignent les Auditeurs de confesser que le Violon est le Roy de instrumens.²

Mersenne is always enthusiastic for the instrument immediately in his mind and he is quite prepared to give an equivalent title to the lute or viol. In spite of this, and much more in a like vein, he shows in these and the following chapters (on the viols) that his artistic sense of the suitability of the violin to a certain type of music was not entirely drugged.³ He deals at some length with the left-hand technique and other aspects of the use of the violin in these chapters in a manner which tells how completely the instrument was understood; but our space denies further quotation. Nor shall we say more of the history of the violin in France save that it advanced steadily to meet the late awakening of the viols, in the early eighteenth century, in a conflict in which the bitterness and violence were alike remarkable.

It was for long accepted by musical historians that Corelli was the first serious composer for the violin, but this was

¹ *Harmonie universelle* (1636), Livre premier, Des Instruments (*sic*), p. 11.

² *Ibid.*, Livre Quatriesme des Instrumens, p. 177.

³ See, for example, the passage quoted above, p. 26.

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absurd. When Corelli was a lad, and twenty years before he published his Opera prima in 1683, Giovanni Legrenzi and Tomaso Albinoni were composing sonatas for the violin family of an elaborate nature and with results that are musically excellent. And these, like their countryman Horatio Vecchi, scored their parts always to include the true tenor violin.

In Germany, although the family of viols was still in use in the last quarter of the seventeenth century,¹ and although the bass viol lived long under the hands of Bach, Handel, and Telemann, the violin had found many accomplished servants before 1700. There are suites of pieces for the entire family,² and sonatas for the violin, with accompaniment by the bass and harpsichord; and in these we see technique pushed very far. The most famous composer here is Johann Jacob Walther (or Walter),³ whose executive demands have received more attention than the very considerable musical value of some of his sonatas.

CHAPTER V

THE VIOLIN IN ENGLAND

§ i.

MOST readers will be familiar with the information about the position of the violin in England during the early Stuart and Commonwealth periods which Hawkins quotes at

e.g. the *Suites for Four viols* by Daniel Funck, 1677.

e.g. R. T. Mayer, 1692. His *Pythagorische Smids-Funcklein* is a thoroughly well set.

See his *Scherzi Da Violino Solo* . . . Mayence (1687) and *Hortulus Chelicus*, Mayence (1688, second edition 1694); in the last named there is a 'Serenata a un Coro di Violini, Organo Tremolante, Chittarino, Piva, Due Trombe e Timpani, Lira Tedesca, et Harpa smorzata, Per Violino Solo'. (Piva presumably means a bagpipe.)

This Walther should not be confused with the Johann Gottfried Walther who wrote the valuable *Musikalisches Lexikon*, Leipzig, 1732.

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great length from Anthony à Wood's book.¹ From it the definite picture is obtained that before the Restoration the violin was no fit instrument for a gentleman and should only be used by 'a common fiddler'. There are here many entertaining stories, illuminating both technically and socially; as of the treble viol player who could only play the violin when held downwards; of Anthony who taught himself the violin and could only manage it when tuned in fourths instead of fifths because he had been trained on the viol; of the adventure disguised as strolling players, and much more. These have been so often quoted that they need not be repeated here. Reference must, however, be made to his lively description of the playing of the German, Thomas Baltzar, who came over from Lubeck soon after Charles II's return; his astonishing technique aroused enormous admiration, but none would dare 'to play against him'. With all his tricks, such as running-up to the very limit of the finger-board and elaborate use of double-stopping, he might be set down as a mere virtuoso had he not left a few compositions the sterling quality of which makes small beer of those by his temporary professional brethren like Davis Mell.²

Thomas Mace was especially venomous about the violin, not because of the instrument itself but rather by reason of the effect upon music that its introduction had occasioned. With the consorts of viols, he says,

our Great Care was, to have *All the Parts Equally Heard*; . . . But now the *Modes* and *Fashions* have cry'd *These Things* down, and set up a *Great Idol* in their Room; observe with what a *Wonderful Swiftness* They now run over their *Brave New Ayres*; and

¹ See pp. 88 et seq. of the 1772 edition of *Athenae Oxonienses*.

² Some are preserved in Playford's *Division Violin*. Baltzar entered the King's private band as a violin in 1660 and his place was filled in 1667 by Thomas Fitz. In one entry he is referred to as 'the Swede' (*The King's Musick*, pp. 125 et seq.). There is a good account of Baltzar's playing in North's *Musickall Gramarian*, pp. 28, 29 (Oxford University Press, 1925).

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with what *High-Priz'd Noise*, viz. 10, or 20 *Violins*, &c. as I said before, to a *Some-Single-Soul'd Ayre*; it may be of 2 or 3 *Parts*, or some *Coranto*, *Serabrand* [sic], or *Brawle* (as the *New-Fashion'd-Word*) and such like *Stuff*, seldom any other; which is rather fit to make a Man's *Ears Glow*, and fill his *Brains full of Frisks*, &c. than to *Season*, and *Sober his Mind*, or *Elevate his Affection to Goodness*.¹

His sense of the pure balance of parts was greatly offended by the use of two or three violins with only 'one Small Weak-sounding-Bass-Viol'; but were it

Harpicon, or *Organ*, . . . or *Theorboe-Lute* . . . *The Scoulding Violins will out-Top Them All*.²

He has some entirely true observations upon the dangers of tasteless patrons in high places and also upon the unmusicianly virtuoso who may have

a Particular Singularity, or Twang, upon some one Instrument . . . and though Ignorant in the Main) thinks himself really to be The Thing, which he is Cry'd up for.³

Yet, in spite of all this, he was willing to allow a Pair of Violins to be added to the Chest of Viols

to be in Readiness for any *Extraordinary Jolly*, or *Jocund Consort-occasion*; But never use Them, but with *This Proviso*, viz. Be sure you make an *Equal Provision* for Them, by the *Addition*, and *Strength of Basses*.⁴

And to this end he recommends that 'a *Pair of Lusty Full Priz'd Theorboes*' should be ready to hand.

§ ii.

Such is the conventional and accepted picture of the violin in England before the days of Purcell, but there are strong reasons for supposing that it is very largely false and that the violin was seriously cultivated in England much earlier

Musick's Monument (1676), Part III, Chap. I, p. 236.

Ibid., p. 233.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 237.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Chap. IV, p. 246.

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than we have been accustomed to think. Upon this we can only touch briefly here, leaving details to the other work already mentioned.¹ The evidence consists entirely of music by composers belonging to the first half of the seventeenth century, and it is extremely probable that only a small proportion of such work has yet come to light. Christopher Simpson, the famous violist, left some works in three parts for violins wherein he shows a sparkling brilliance and dash not usually associated with his grave outlook. But the most remarkable man of this period is William Young, who was in the 'King's Musick' for the last ten years of a long life;² he left behind many compositions for the viols, both solo and in consort, but also works for the violin. His works for the latter instrument were printed and a unique copy of the book exists to-day in the University of Upsala in Sweden;³ some other works exist in manuscript in Poland. How this composer has come to be neglected is one of the insoluble mysteries of music; long before Purcell, he wrote finely constructed sonatas of the greatest beauty and depth of feeling, with an idiom typically English yet perfectly adapted to the instrument.⁴ Again, we know many fine sonatas for the violin by John Jenkins, that grand old man of our national music. Even earlier, there is Henry Butler (c. 1630), whose name Mace lists as one of the principal composers of divisions for the bass viol, writing works for the violin, with bass viol and

¹ See *supra*, p. 98; and also, to the results of Dr. Whittaker's researches.

² He died 1672 (*The King's Musick*, p. 243).

³ A copy was once in England, for it figures amongst the books belonging to Britton, the famous musical coal-merchant.

⁴ Dr. W. G. Whittaker gave a lecture before the Royal Institution upon Wm. Young, Dec. 2, 1928. Mr. Dolmetsch has played many of his works both for viols and for violin, the latter from the Upsala volume and also from the Polish MSS. Young's works for the violin are about to be published, under Dr. Whittaker's editorship, by the Oxford University Press.

While these pages are in proof, Dr. Whittaker tells me of his discovery of some interesting sonatas for three violins, with bass, by one Lambert Peirkin

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psichord, which fully merit the title of 'sonatas'.¹ A striking point about all this writing is that when an experienced list comes upon it, he says at once, 'This is not viol music'; as usual, these composers knew their instruments.

But this is only part of the story. Except for Simpson's, the works mentioned above are for the treble violins; it is now realized that even earlier in the century the English had written serious compositions for the violin consort. At Christ Church, Oxford, there has been recently found a set of pieces by Orlando Gibbons with a bass part going down to C, and the whole style of which, while quite unsuited to the lute, runs comfortably upon the violins. In the same collection there exist analogous pieces by Coperario (John Cooper), who was so famous as a composer of viol consorts. The style of the writing clearly indicates that this is not viol music, and they are definitely marked 'For the violins'.² These have only been brought to light as this chapter is in preparation, and none can say what further exploration of the vast material may not bring forth. Gibbons died in 1625, and the works of Coperario must date at least as early in the century. Even earlier there are the consorts of Anthony Holbourne marked 'viols, violins or wind instruments'. In the Lord Chamberlain's Records there is an entry under the date of Feb. 1620/1 to pay 'fortie marks by the year' to Thomas Simpson who had been appointed

composer for our violins, that they may be the better furnished with variety and choice for our delight and pleasure in that kind.³

Violin works by both Jenkins and Butler are played at Mr. Dolmetsch's recitals.

For the information about these works by Gibbons and Coperario I am indebted to Mr. M. A. Pallis. The Gibbons pieces have been published by the Fellowship, but apparently under the impression that they were viol Fantasies; they transpose the notes a fourth higher and halve their time-value.

The King's Musick, p. 53. This is, I think, the earliest definite entry showing the violin in the Court band; the entry of 1603 for Queen Elizabeth's funeral obviously a special occasion for the Procession.

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In 1627 violinists are mentioned, and in 1628 Estienne Nau takes the place of Thomas Lupo, deceased, as 'composer of music for the violins'.¹ After this, references to the violins as well as to the 'violls', become general.

Of the artistic merit of this early seventeenth-century school of composers for the violins, in England, we cannot yet speak with knowledge, except in the cases of Young, Jenkins, Butler, and Simpson, whose high standard we know. But the existence of much concerted music for the violin family must now be accepted, and more examples will rapidly be found now that it is known that the families both of viol and of violins were in use in the early Stuart days. When we recall that these composers were grounded upon the highest development of the viol fantasy, the most advanced instrumental writing in Europe, it is at least no unduly hopeful expectation that to them may have to be assigned the leading place as the pioneers of violin chamber music.²

It is important to note that none of the English violin works of the seventeenth century is in the nature of solo music. There are always at least three real parts, either one violin with a bass and organ or harpsichord, or two violins with a bass. This applies to Purcell's violin music.

§ iii.

It is difficult to say when the violin first appeared in England. A popular assumption has been that the stage instruction 'Musicke of Violenze' in the first act of the tragedy of

¹ *The King's Musick*, p. 64.

² As I have indicated, a practical familiarity with viol music is necessary for the ready separation of the violin music, when MSS. are not entitled; but the range is often a helpful guide. Those early fantasies of Purcell seem to run naturally for the violin family and in these it may be we have a magnificent ending to the old English consort of violins. The *Fantasy upon One Note*, with the tenor holding *c* throughout, is a fitting *Vale*.

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orboduc, 1561, is the earliest mention. There is certainly an entry in the Hengrave Hall papers, under the date 1572, showing that Sir Thomas Kytson then bought a 'treble violin' (so spelt) for twenty shillings.¹ There are several references to the violin at the close of the sixteenth century and it was obviously well established in this country by that date.

An indication has been given of the use to which it was put up to the time of the Restoration, and after that period its history will be familiar from other sources. The wealth of Purcell, that sunset of the true English tradition,² is at last being recognized, but there was another figure in this country at the same time who has been shamefully neglected. This Nicola Matteis, who came to England, from where no one seems to know, soon after the Restoration, to teach the guitar and the violin, and whose efforts to popularize the former instrument seem reflected in Playford's jeers:

Not a City Dame though a *Tap-Wife*, but is ambitious to have her Daughters Taught by Mounsieur La *Novo Kickshawibus* on the Litter.³

Roger North has left accounts of Matteis both in the *Memoirs of Musick* and in the *Musicall Gramarian*, and other references are found in contemporary records. Evelyn calls him 'that pendulous violin' and speaks of his playing as resembling consort of several instruments'.⁴

I have not seen the original MS., but Dr. Fellowes, from whose book on the *English Madrigal* I have taken the entry, assures me that he gives an exact copy.

Purcell derives musically directly from Matthew Lock. The introduction to the Sonatas, in which he pretends to have followed 'the Italian manner', is to be read but as a sign of the times.

John Playford, *Musick's Delight on the Cithren*, 1666: the Preface. Matteis is usually said to have come to England about 1672, but this seems only based on the fact that the earliest record is that of Evelyn in 1674; the passage in Playford may not be intended for Matteis, but it is very suggestive for many reasons.

⁴ Evelyn's *Diary*, Nov. 19, 1674.

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His manner of using his violin was much out of ye comon roade of handling, but out of it he made ye utmost of sound double single, swift, & all manners of touch w^{ch} made such Impressions that his Audience was not onely pleased but full of wonder at him and his way of performing. He was a very tall & large bodied man, used a very long bow, rested his Instrument against his short ribbs, and with that (having onely a full Accompaniment) could hold an audience by ye ears longer then ordinary, & his whisper not be heard amongst them. In short the character of that man to those who never saw or heard him is Incredible; But out of that Awkwardness he taught ye English to hold ye bow by ye wood onely & not to touch ye hair w^{ch} was no small reformation; he published some books of lessons for his scholars that shew much of his air, & skill, but nothing of his manner of playing, w^{ch} made them much richer than ye prints shew and now it is Impossible either to find out or describe the musick he made of them.¹

These 'books of lessons' are the four parts of the *Ayres for the Violin* (1685), one of the most desirable treasures for which a musical library can hope.² If we have lost his personal interpretation, the works remain to us and form a memorial to a composer whose name should be respected among the great. Though most of these fine pieces are set with figured bass for harpsichord and viola da gamba, some are 'senz' basso' and in such unaccompanied works he foreshadows the analogous writings of Bach; though Walther and Baltzar come even nearer to Bach, showing how general was this type of work. North credits Matteis with being one of the principal factors in the introduction of the Italian manner of music into England, a thing one would rather have thought

¹ Roger North, *The Musickall Gramarian*, pp. 35 and 36 (quoted from Miss Hilary Andrews' edition, 1925).

² It needs a sharp eye to discern the cunningly concealed date engraved upon each title-page. Although all four parts are dated 1685, many years must have elapsed between the compositions of the first and last parts. If the latest work date in 1685, the earliest must be about 1670.

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ould be set to a debit account; but if the older English school was to go in any case, in those changing times, the new music could not have come with a better model than Matteis.

Fashions changed against English art and English music and imitation of the Italians sounded the death-knell of our European position. Occasionally a figure like Boyce shows that the spirit was not entirely dead, but over most of the comunculi the robust genius of great Handel (that Dumas ère of music) strode like Gargantua among the armies of microchole.

Of the outlook upon the violin two quotations shall suffice. John Francis De La Fond, that cocksure iconoclast, found the subject 'of Double Stops for Bow-Instruments . . . altogether unhandled':

at method of playing, as far as I can find, has not been known ng.¹

or would the stern arbiters of musical taste have it known all.

ven the use of double stops on this instrument [the violin] may, in my opinion, be considered as one of the abuses of it; since, in the hands of the greatest masters, they only deaden the tone, soil the expression, and obstruct the execution. In a word, they effle the performer's art, and bring down *one good* instrument to the state of *two indifferent ones*.²

We are reminded by this of Mace's complaint against 'the angle soul'd ayre'. Perhaps Avison represents the most advanced stage of the reaction, in which the worship of pure line' seems to have overridden all else; its opinion of the

¹ *New System of Music*, 1725, p. lxiii.

² Charles Avison, *An Essay on Musical Expression*, 1752, pp. 96 and 97. See also *Remarks on Mr. Avison's Essay* (anon.), 1753 (by Dr. Wm. Hayes), and Avison's *Reply to the Author of Remarks*, 1753: a rather muddled controversy, brightened by personal abuse.

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great polyphonic school of the past may quite fairly be epitomized thus:

The music was so muddled up with internal parts that the tune could not be heard; and in any case, there was no tune worth hearing.¹

CHAPTER VI

THE BODY AND THE BOW

§ i.

FROM the end of the eighteenth century changes have been made in the fittings of the violin, with consequent effects upon the tone-quality and usage; and perhaps of even greater importance is the radical alteration of the bow. In the instrument itself the differences are well known, but the logic of their sequence has not been sufficiently stressed.

The first step was the raising and arching of the bridge which had previously been only slightly rounded. To preserve the relation of the strings and finger-board, the end of the latter had also to be lifted, and to accommodate this the neck had to be thrown backward. Thus the angle made by the strings with the plane of the bridge was reduced, and consequently the vertical component of the tension, carried through the bridge to the belly, was increased. To this cause must be added two others which, though of secondary importance, added to this increased pressure; in the nineteenth century musical fashion raised the standard pitch about a semitone above that obtaining up to the first half of the eighteenth century;² and, in striving after power and bri-

¹ Charles Avison, *An Essay on Musical Expression*, 1752, pp. 41-6. This is an exaggeration of Avison's views, incredible though it may sound.

² That there were wide discrepancies in pitch between various countries in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries is indicated by Quantz, *La Flûte Traversière*, Chap. XVII, Sect. VII, §§ 6 and 7.

THE BODY AND BOW

ance, the neck of the violin was lengthened by an amount of the order of half an inch. On the treble side of the bridge the pressure is supported by the adjacent sound-post, but the bass side presses directly upon the arched belly with no vertical support beneath; to give the necessary resistance on the latter side without interfering with the acoustic scheme of which the sound-post is in truth 'the soul') the belly is lengthened by the bass-bar, which acts as a T-shaped border. Now the most famous model has not a highly arched belly, so that when the changes took place which increased the vertical pressure, it was found necessary to enlarge the bass-bar in this type. But what was done perforce in some makes of the violin became a fashion to be followed by makers and repairers in all types, whether really needed or not; so that the heavy modern bass-bar has become a universal fitting upon new and old instruments alike.

It is important to understand why the instrument with an arched belly and a sound-post, such as a violin or a viol, differs so fundamentally from that with a round body and flat table, like the lute or rebec. In the latter the table vibrates freely as a sound-board supported only at its edges. In the former the vibrations are of a totally different nature, for the belly is fixed not only at its edges, but firmly and definitely by the sound-post near its centre. The maximum amplitude of vibration of a free flat table, as in the lute, must be near the centre, but in the belly of a viol or violin the vibrations are completely damped at the point where the sound-post gives support. This will explain why the belly must be arched to allow of the vibrations in a different plane, and the importance of the arching upon tone. Also it will explain why it is essential that the sound-holes should be where they are, for their purpose is not in the least 'to let the sound out', as some suppose, but to permit the arched belly to vibrate with freedom. And it should also be remembered

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that the back of a violin or of a viol responds comparatively little to the vibrations transmitted by the ribs and the sound-post; its chief purpose is to support that fulcrum for the vibrations of the belly.

In what dimly distant age this remarkable principle of the sound-post was produced it is impossible to conjecture; but one of the most powerful pieces of evidence of the musical craftsmanship of the Middle Ages is that, in the oldest violins known, those of the fifteenth century, the arching of the belly, the position of the sound-holes, and the placing and proportions of the bass-bar are all confidently established as utterly perfect a balance of design as anything ever produced by later hands.¹ It cannot be too strongly emphasized that there is not the slightest reason for supposing that the quality of instrument making in Europe had ever any occasion to 'improve', once the Dark Ages were well passed. Nor would the last hundred and fifty years have produced such ponderous stupidities about this if that overshadowing new-comer, the violin, had not been supposed to have reached the meridian of its structure at the end of the seventeenth century; from the whole story of craftsmanship the violin has robbed as extensively as from other phases of music.

The lengthening of the neck has involved the use of slightly thinner strings, and this is confirmed by Mersenne when he tells us that the E string of a violin was suitable for the fourth course of a lute; an E string of to-day would be too light for that purpose. Why the finger-board became lengthened is not easy to understand, as, quite apart from harmonics, the strings are not pressed right down to the wood in stopping extreme notes, and the accounts of seventeenth-century players convince us that in some of their more exuberant moments they stopped outside their finger-board altogether.

¹ For example, the bass viol of Hanss Vohar, illustrated in Plate I.

THE BODY AND BOW

§ ii.

The stranger to these topics who has absorbed the romance of Cremona is liable to be shocked when told that for modern requirements it is necessary to remove practically all the workmanship of Stradivarius and of his contemporaries, outside the actual body; but when he learns that it is also necessary to reconstruct the inside of the violin, he becomes frankly incredulous. He says, in effect, that either these reputations must be undeserved or that we must be guilty of sacrilege. But the verdict of generations of illustrious performers has sealed these reputations far more effectively than even the auction-rooms, so that the second charge only calls for examination. The changes have become so much a matter of habit to-day that their origin is forgotten and their value taken too much for granted. The principal factor, the arching and raising of the bridge, came in at the time when fashion turned against the use of full chords and part-writing in the solo instrument. The playing of the 'single soul'd re' was facilitated, and a sharper, more penetrating tone obtained, a tone that was more assertive without actually having a greater volume. But the purity and beauty of the tone has suffered, as the writer can testify after four years' experience of hearing old violins both modernized and restored to their original fitting. Makers still take the early eighteenth-century models as the finest to copy, and it is absurd to suggest that the masters of that age, who were usually accomplished players as well, could not make all their parts perfectly. There has been no gain in true power, and the original fittings are perfectly well adapted to modern music.¹

For example, the violin works of Brahms seem to me to gain enormously by the use of the earlier fittings and bow.

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§ iii.

There is no radical difference between the bow for the viola and that for the violin, save that pictorial evidence of the seventeenth century seems to indicate that the latter was a trifle shorter. The length of the free hair for the violin bow of this and the first half of the next century may be set at 22 inches, though some pictures, and one or two surviving examples, show that this length was often as short as 20 inches. When Matteis used a long bow, we have seen that this is recorded as an unusual occurrence; though from the dimensions of all known viol bows, it is safe to say that even here a 'long bow' for the violin would not have exceeded 24 inches or so for the free hair, at this period. The delicacy, strength and lightness of the viol bow therefore apply also to the violin bow, but the principal distinction from the modern bow is that the tension of the hair is preserved by the outward arching of the stick, as we noted in the case of the viol bow and not by the straightening of an inward curve. The 'camber', or inward curve of the stick, is not another way of obtaining the same effect, for it embraces a fundamental change. When the stick bends in an outward arc, the greater the pressure that is applied to the bow, the greater becomes the tension of the hair to resist this pressure; with the modern bow the reverse happens, for as the pressure is increased the tension naturally decreases as the hair approaches the stick.

The earlier bow had also a head, like that of the viol bow which was a real continuation of the stick and so possessed a mechanical strength at this point which is lacking in the modern hatchet head.

Because of its firmness, allied to its lightness, the bow of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries gives a great crispness in staccato effects and in very rapid detached notes.

THE BODY AND BOW

helps to give clearness to the phrasing and sweetness to the tone, and it is a valuable factor in the playing of music involving the holding of two or more real parts. It is advisable to consider that composers like Corelli, Matteis, Purcell, and even Bach and Handel, had such a bow in their minds when writing for the violin. But this bow stands at one disadvantage compared with the Tourte model: it does not help the bad or slovenly player.

§ iv.

Whatever De La Fond and Avison may have thought about double-stopping, this form of composition is in evidence from the early part of the seventeenth century and there is no reason to suppose that it does not go back to the earliest days of the instrument. When due credit has been given to the earlier masters of this treatment, amongst whom J. J. Walther and Matteis deserve honoured mention, it will be generally admitted that the highest development was reached under the hands of J. S. Bach, whose writing for the unaccompanied violin is of the utmost complexity of real parts.

It would be trite to say that these works are difficult to play, for their interpretation demands a brain and hand far superior to those needed for the most agile of exhibition tricks; yet upon the modern violin it is not a matter of difficulty, but of sheer impossibility. Because of the highly arched bridge and the cambered bow, a pure chord of three notes cannot be held, consequently one of two things must go: either the tone has to be sacrificed by grinding upon the strings, or the chords must be taken as arpeggios. However skillfully the virtuoso may disguise his expedient, the music inevitably suffers and, if there were no other reason, these

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works alone make the original fittings of the violin essential for its music in our period.¹

Unfortunately, although the original violin, and its bow is perfectly suitable for all modern music, no professional would dare to take it up until some leading virtuoso, too highly placed to care what audiences and critics think, has set the example.

CHAPTER VII

TENOR, BASS, AND CONTRA-BASS

§ i.

OF all the amazing things that have happened in the suppression of the early instruments, none is so difficult to understand as the loss of the tenor violin. There is nothing esoteric about this instrument. It represents a part of importance at least equal to that of any other. Strangely enough, all authorities seem sound on their information about it. Not only was it used throughout the seventeenth century but it is needed for the works of J. S. Bach and Handel, and even later. It has never suffered a total oblivion in practice for there have been many attempts to revive it in some form or other even up to recent times. But a tuning pitched an octave below that of the treble violin demands an instrument too large to be played overarm. Even Hermann Ritter's more sensible attempt was to no purpose: the professional world 'cared for none of these things'.

After a hundred and fifty years of string quartets without any tenor voice, composers have naturally acquired a certain

¹ It was not until 1925, after years of experiment, that Mr. Dolmetsch considered that he had completely recovered the original fittings of the violin.

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itude for dodging the vacant line; but their skill remains, after all, a makeshift, for it is clear that if something else is playing the tenor, that something cannot be playing its own part. The same may be said of the orchestra, where, if the violoncellos play the tenor part upon their quite unsuitable C string, the true bass part must be given to some wind instrument, since the double-basses alone are inadequate; if the equally unsuitable strings of the alto are used, then something else must take their part. If a subdivision of violoncellos and altos or violins is tried, it destroys the balance of the parts. And all this could be avoided in the most simple manner. The tenor violin is in appearance like a small violoncello, the length of the string from bridge to nut being about 19½ inches; it was originally tuned, as we have seen, a fifth below the alto and a fifth above the old bass;¹ as the latter was raised one tone, the tenor followed and so became tuned an octave below the ordinary violin. The instrument itself is not difficult to find and has survived as a violoncello for children. Being tuned to the bass pitch, it has acquired a bad reputation for tone, but strung and tuned to its rightful manner it will be found to have an individual character not to be obtained from either violoncello or alto. It is, of course, played in the same manner as a violoncello, and this may account for the failure of the nineteenth-century attempts to recover for these were made like outsize altos, beyond the reach of a normal arm.

Doubtless the trouble has come from the absence of scope afforded by the instrument to professionals; yet it is in no worse case than the alto, which does not expire for want of players. And the tenor might with advantage be exploited as a solo instrument by composers.² Again, many violinists

¹ See *supra*, pp. 180 et seq.

² Auguste Tolbecque, always a strong advocate of the true tenor, knew a professional soloist upon the instrument in Paris.

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find it a professional advantage to play also the alto, and any violoncellist could add the tenor to his attainments with very little difficulty.

§ ii.

The violoncello needs little attention here, save a repetition of the prayer that it may never again be confused, in history and use, with the bass viol.¹ Its earlier tuning has already been described.² Before the eighteenth century it was bowed in the same manner as the viols, for it is shown with the bow held over the hand in the art of the period,³ and we have definite evidence of the change as late as 1752, when Quantz tells us that 'some use the same method of bowing as for the bass viol while others hold their bow as for a violin', and this latter method he speaks of as 'chez les Italiens'.⁴ Quantz whose German work was published simultaneously in French is an author who should be considered the corner-stone of any honest study of the first half of the eighteenth century. The neglect of his book may be due in part to its title, from which it would seem at first glance to concern only the transversal flute; its contents are far more wide, and his profoundly sensible remarks, both general and particular, cover all the instruments of the orchestra of his day. No student of the violin and its music at this period can afford to ignore Quantz.

¹ This is especially important in connexion with eighteenth-century works where the two instruments were often scored together: see *The Treatment of Instrumental Music*, pp. 12, 13, and 52.

² See *supra*, pp. 180 et seq.

³ The reader may examine typical examples in *Musical Instruments in Pictures*, pp. 99 and 110.

⁴ Johann Joachim Quantz . . . *Versuch einer Anweisung die Flöte traversiere zu spielen* . . . 1752.

Jean Joachim Quantz, *Essai d'une Méthode pour apprendre à jouer de la Flûte Traversière* . . . 1752.

See Chap. XVII, Sect. IV, § 2 (p. 216 of the latter edition).

The German version has been reprinted in recent years.

See the passage from Rousseau quoted *supra*, p. 149, about the Italian method of holding the 'cello.

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While the free corner of the nut of a violin bow is cut square, it will usually be found that the corresponding corner of the nut of a modern violoncello bow is rounded off; but if a maker is asked why this should be so, he is extremely unlikely to know. The reason is simple: it is a survival of the days when the violoncello was bowed like the viols, as it is necessary for comfort that this corner should be rounded when holding the bow above the hand, and no viol bow, for any size of instrument, ever has a sharp corner there. What has been said in the last chapter about the changes in the fitting of the violin applies with equal force to the fitting of the violoncello.

Somewhere at the end of the seventeenth century, or thereabouts, the violoncello acquired in Italy the name of *Viola di spalla* (shoulder). The earliest mention of this name that has come to the writer's notice is that by the prolific Mattheson in 1713, and this reference seems to have caused a lot of confusion. He gives each of the instruments a section and an adjective thus:¹

18. die *complaisante* und durchdringende *Violine*: § 19. Die verübte *Viola d'Amore*: § 20. Die füllende *Viola, Violetta, Viola da bacio* [i.e. the alto]: § 21. Die säuselnde *Viola di Gamba, Gall. Basse de Viole*:² § 22. Der hervorragende *Violoncello, die Bassa Viola und Viola di Spala*: § 23. Der brummende *Violone, Gall. Basse de violon, Teutsch: Grosse Bass-Geige*.

But his description of the *Violoncello* is not that of a true bass violin, but of something of similar size and shape 'with 5. or even 6. strings'; otherwise his remarks would apply well enough to a violoncello.³ Something like this can be seen in

[Johann] Mattheson, *Das Neu-Eröffnete Orchestre*, Hamburg, 1713, Part III, Chap. III (pp. 281-6).

He seems to know only the bass; but he mentions that 'a man named Rousseau has written a book expressly about it, in which the curious may find full information' (p. 284).

He mentions its use for the continuo part, and it seems in all respects, except

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the five-stringed bass violin in the painting by Dirck Hals, *Der Cellospieler*, in the Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum.¹ Mattheson mentions the method of supporting it by a band passing over the shoulder, which gave it the secondary name; and, in drawings of the eighteenth century, wandering musicians are sometimes shown playing the violoncello standing.² Later in the century Adlung gives 'Viola di spala' as a simple alternative for violoncello.³ One marvels, therefore, how the pretentious catalogue of a famous collection could apply this name to a tenor viola da gamba: even as one does at the description of the next item in the same catalogue, where an alto viola da gamba is described as 'Viola da Braccio, or Arm viol'!⁴

§ iii.

The precise nature and use of the true double-bass of the violin family is an exceedingly difficult matter to speak of with any certainty. Some readers may be familiar with the example in the Victoria and Albert Museum, ascribed to the early seventeenth century, which is known to have been used in Handel's works in his own day. This is a giant, over eight feet high, and it has four strings. Praetorius illustrates a similar instrument in Plate V of his *Sciagraphia* (1620), but here there are five strings; the tuning has already been mentioned:

FF C G d a

the number of strings, a 'cello; but the ordinary bass violin had been common for a century.

¹ Reproduced in *Musical Instruments in Pictures*, p. 99.

² For example, Victoria and Albert Museum, Department of Paintings, No. 1694/1871, *An Asylum for the Deaf*, by John Nixon (c. 1725-80).

³ Jakob Adlung, *Anleitung zur musikalischen Gelahrheit*, 1758, p. 599.

⁴ Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, *Catalogue of the Crosby Brown Collection of Musical Instruments, Part I*, 1904. Items 2227 and 974 (p. 65). The reason given is even more astounding:

'Large Tenor Viol. . . . This instrument was played on the knee, the head being placed over the left shoulder; hence the name Viola da spalla'!

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Mattheson, when speaking of the 'brummende Violone' in the passage quoted above, says that it is twice as large as the cello, 'yes, often bigger', with strings of length and thickness in proportion. He says nothing about the tuning and number of the strings, but closes with the feeling remark that 'to play this monster [Ungeheur] for three or four hours without preparation is a labour fit for a horse'.¹ Later, Quantz also uses 'Violone' for the double-bass violin, but Mattheson would never have written as he did of the effort of playing a real violone, or double-bass viol, for upon this child can play with ease. Quantz explains his name, *Grande Basse de Violon* (Violone)', as follows:

On parle ici de cet instrument à quatre cordes accordées par quartes du bas en haut E (mi), A (la), D (re), G (sol), que les Allemands appellent: Contre-Violon.

Its tuning gives the notes:

EE AA D G

Quantz adds that this type was so much more satisfactory than the type with five strings, which was commonly called *la Basse de Violon Allemande*, that the latter has gone out of fashion. In addition to this distinction, Quantz mentions different sizes of his *Grande Basse de Violon* when two are added together.²

To this diversity may be added the passing reference of Rousseau to the double-bass violin 'in the manner of Lorraine', mentioned in a previous chapter;³ the tuning of this would be:

EE♭ BB♭ F c

In the Vienna collection there is a fine example, entirely in original state, dated 1704 in Padua, and this is of much more

Mattheson, *opus cit.*, p. 286.

Joachim Quantz, *La Flûte Traversière*, Berlin, 1752, Chap. XVII, pp. 222-6.

³ See *supra*, p. 185.

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graceful appearance than the earlier specimen in the Victoria and Albert Museum. It has only three strings, thus indicating yet another variation.

True to its type, this contra-bass violin was unfretted, but Quantz, in the chapter quoted, strongly advocates the use of frets on this member of the family, for the better intonation and resonance.

It is certain, however, that only with the largest bodies of instruments, where volume rather than quality was needed, was the contra-bass violin used; everywhere else, including the concerto grosso, the smaller double-bass-viol was employed, its tone being so much more pure and its handling so much more comfortable. That it continued in use with at least five strings and typical tuning up to the end of the eighteenth century is shown by late writers;¹ but it was about this date that it began to be coarsened and, by reducing the number of its strings and by shedding its valuable frets, became the familiar 'double-bass' of our modern orchestra. It may still be seen bowed in the viol manner and seems on the road to recover some of its lost strings; perhaps some day it will also recover the frets, to every one's advantage.

CHAPTER VIII

THE KIT, OR POCHETTE; AND OTHER MATTERS

§ i.

THERE are a few children of the violin family about which a word must be said before leaving the subject, but no despite of their worth is intended by brevity.

¹ For example: [J. B. de Laborde and P. J. Roussier], *Essai sur la Musique*, Paris, 1780, Vol. I; J. A. Koberich, *Geig-Fundament*, Ausburg, 1787. (The latter is quoted on the authority of Sachs' *Reallexikon*, p. 224.)

THE KIT OR POCHETTE

eatment. Mention has already been made of the violino piccolo, tuned a fourth higher than the ordinary violin.¹ It is not uncommon to find this instrument sharing the misfortune of the true tenor, for it is given to children to learn on a violin, and, being strung and tuned in that manner, sounds wretched. Properly fitted and tuned to its correct pitch, it will be found to possess a singularly sweet tone, with character different from that heard when the same notes are played upon a violin.

§ ii.

The exact nature of the violoncello piccolo, associated with certain works of Bach, is uncertain. Boccherini scores one part in his Quintets for a violoncello alto, and there is an analogous use by Haydn. The sixth, and last, of Bach's suites for the Violoncello is marked for an instrument 'à cinq cordes', and as the tuning required is

C G d a e'

could not have been larger than a tenor violin. This instrument may be the same as the violoncello piccolo.

As to the so-called viola pomposa of Bach, it should be remembered that this name does not actually occur in any of Bach's scores. There is a set of sonatas for the viola pomposa by an obscure composer at the end of the eighteenth century. The customary statement that this instrument was a five-stringed alto violin appears to be only a guess, unsupported by contemporary evidence.

§ iii.

The substitution of wire for the gut strings of the violin had been tried at least as early as the beginning of the seventeenth century. Praetorius, after saying that the 'family of violins is

¹ See *supra*, p. 183.

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so well known that it needs no description', adds 'except this, that if strings of latten or steel be used, a smother and much more beautiful resonance will be given'.¹ But he omits to point out the restriction imposed upon the compass by the use of wire, for it would not be possible for this to exceed an octave; and if the effects of wire were so good, why should gut have been so universally used? The answer is given by Rousseau, who mentions the use of wire strings on viols; but since this, like the corresponding reference in Mattheson, is attached to the name *Viole d'Amour*, the quotation is included in the following chapter.²

There are other seventeenth-century references to the use of wire-strung violins, and as late as the end of the eighteenth century a sort of bastard viola d'amore was made by Perry of Dublin, wherein the sympathetic strings were omitted and seven pairs of wires substituted for those of gut.³

§ iv.

There remains only the tiniest of all violins, the dancing-master's kit, which was but a changed form of a much older instrument bearing the same name. The original kit was like a little rebec with a body greatly elongated in proportion to its breadth,⁴ until the late seventeenth century, when the form of a diminutive violin was adopted. The former type was known as the *poche* or *pochette*, though some writers profess to find a reference to a slightly larger form in the first of the names.

One of the earliest *pochettes* known is that in the Copen-

¹ *Syntagma Musicum*, Vol. II (1618), p. 48.

² *Traité de la Viole*, 1687, p. 22. See *infra*, p. 216.

³ Called the *Sultana* or *Cither-viol*: something similar may still be found in Germany with the misleading name of *Streich Zither*.

⁴ Curt Sachs picturesquely describes it as a 'leakage' from the *Rebec* family (*Reallexikon*, 1913, p. 378).

THE KIT OR POCLETTE

agen collection,¹ whereon the inscription assigns it to Conrad Müller of Nuremberg in 1520; and as there are references to the kit in English literature as early as 1510, the instrument must have had its origin well before our period opens.

In Germany the name *posche* was used, until some increasing movement of nationalism rendered *taschengeige* the suitable word. Originally the kit was used on ceremonial occasions,² but in 1636 Mersenne speaks only of its use by those violin players 'who are also teachers of dancing'.³

The kit had usually four strings, but sometimes only three, like its prototype. According to Praetorius in his *Sciagraphia* (Plate XXI), it was tuned an octave above the violin, but in his *Tabella Universalis* he gives notes for three strings only:⁴

a' e" b"

and

g' d" a"

The second of these is, of course, the same as the violino piccolo, without the lowest string.

The kit, as 'taschengeige' implies, was small enough to be carried comfortably in the pocket, and would be held in the crook of the arm. The bow was only about 17 or 18 inches long. Although the tone is small, it is sweet and clear when the instrument is strung and tuned in the correct manner. Owing to the presence of the sound-post, there is a difference of tone-colour between the rebec and the violin forms.

§ v.

In closing this final chapter of the story of the violin, a brief word may be said upon the possibilities lying open for future writers upon the subject; that it will have many

No. 363.

e.g. The Masque of Cesare Negri, for Don John of Austria, June 26, 1574.

Harmonie universelle, Livre Quatriesme des Instrumens, p. 177.

Syntagma Musicum (1618), p. 26.

THE VIOLIN FAMILY

more historians may be taken for granted, but it may be hoped that their works will not perpetuate the family resemblance which, in certain matters, characterizes those that have gone before.

Questions of parentage and nationality are more or less things of antiquarian interest, wherein the present practical revival of early music is not greatly concerned, however absorbing such pursuits may be. But at least we may pray that never again will writers fall into that trap of ignorance whereby the viol becomes the parent of the violin, whereby the two instruments are given a common ancestry, and whereby the music of the one is regarded as the precursor to the music of the other. And, in consequence, there should be dropped all that searching of viols and of their portraiture to find early suggestions for the violin's outline.

Nor will any future study of the violin satisfy just demands unless the author, divesting himself entirely of preconceived ideas, investigates with fairness certain aspects of which no present work gives an impartial account, if indeed they receive any mention at all. Among such matters, the position of English composers for the violin, and for the consort of violins, in the first half of the seventeenth century, is one of the most important; equally necessary is the honest appraisal of the work of Walther, Matteis, and others (some of whose names are at present unknown). But such accounts must be on artistic merits, not that useless hunting to find such things as the first to use the half-shift or the sixth position. For any investigation of this nature a fundamental factor must be the study of the violin, and its bow, in the condition in which it was used before the middle of the eighteenth century; for, without this, the music will be judged upon the evidence of a false witness.

PART III
SYMPATHETIC STRINGS
CHAPTER I
THE VIOLA D'AMORE

WITH its suggestive name and decorative appearance, the VIOLA D'AMORE is an attractive figure to those who know it only by sight. At risk of causing disappointment, it is proposed to deal somewhat perfunctorily with this instrument here, for its musical use is hardly important enough to justify lengthy treatment, and much of its career has been outside our period. The ethereal silvery tone, indeed, has in more of chaste Artemis than of the lover, and some hard realists believe that the name is but a corruption of 'the Viol of the Moor', from the Eastern character of its principal timbre.¹

The viola d'amore partakes of the natures of both the violas and the violins; the structure of the body may be compared to a treble viol, but it is held under the chin or against the chest like an alto violin, and it has no frets.² In its strings it is near to the violas, for these are six or seven in number and are tuned with intervals of thirds and fourths. The name, in one sense, is indicative of the secondary set of strings, made of fine brass, or steel wire, which lie close to the belly; for these are untouched by the bow and sound only by sympathy with the gut strings. It has already been said, in connexion with the lyra viol, that this device had been tried in England at the beginning of the seventeenth century, though by 'time and disuse' it was set aside.

Compare the fate of the swarthy Lodovico, Duke of Milan, nicknamed Moro, whom some historians now want to call 'The Mulberry', saying that he was in reality *Mora*, a charge on the family coat-armour of the Sforzas. See Plate X.

SYMPATHETIC STRINGS

The rediscovery, if such it was, of this idea was apparently a German one, towards the end of the seventeenth century and although the viola d'amore was made in other countries notably Italy, its home has remained predominantly Germany.¹

Rousseau speaks of a Viol d'amour as simple substitution of wire for the gut strings:

l'on voit encore aujourd'hui une espece de Dessus de Viole monté (de chordes de laiton, qu'on appelle Viole d'Amour: mais il est certain que ces chordes font un meschant effet sous l'Archet, qu'elles rendent un Son trop aigre; c'est pour cela que les François ne se sont jamais servy de pareilles chordes.²

With a very different opinion of its effects, this description is confirmed by Mattheson, who says that it 'fulfils its love name, of Viola d'Amore, in its deed and has a most languishing and tender effect'. According to Mattheson, the instrument had four metal strings and one, 'nemlich die Quinte of gut,³ the tuning being

g c' e' g' c''

and he adds that it is a great pity that such an instrument was not made in a larger size.⁴ Thus it is clear that round about 1700 the name Viola d'amore was applied to two different instruments.

One of the earliest to write for the true viola d'amore was Attilio Ariosti, who published a set of sonatas for it about

¹ For example, there are specimens made by Tiedke of Hamburg about 1680.

² Jean Rousseau, *Traité de la Viole*, 1687, p. 22. Compare the reference in *Evelyn's Diary* (Nov. 20, 1679), where, speaking of the pleasure he had had from some instrumental playing, the diarist says,

but above all for its sweetness and novelty, the viol d'amore of 5 wire strings plaid with a bow, being but an ordinary violin, play'd on lyre way a German.

³ At least one of the strings *must* have been of gut, as metal strings would not sound at the lower end of this range.

⁴ J. Mattheson, *Das Neu-Eröffnete Orchestre*, 1713, p. 282.

THE VIOLA D'AMORE

720. There is a fine concerto for viola d'amore and lute, with muted strings and organ, by Vivaldi;¹ and Bach, Handel, and others have used the instrument for special effects. The tuning of both the gut and the wire strings was variable and the music was frequently written in a sort of tablature, of which an account will be given when dealing with that subject.

To point its name, the viola d'amore had usually the head of a blindfold Cupid surmounting the peg-box. The sound-holes are almost always of the 'flame' type, with a notch cut out on the inner side. A Kit was also made on this principle and was known as the Pochette d'amour.

The tunings used by Ariosti relate to four strings only, but additional strings in the bass could be tuned on the given chord and used. The actual pitch of the notes is indicated by the figured bass.

Accordatura	I.	<i>b</i> <i>b</i>	<i>e</i> <i>b</i> '	<i>g</i> '	<i>b</i> <i>b</i> '
„	II.	<i>a</i>	<i>c</i> <i>♯</i> '	<i>e</i> '	<i>a</i> '
„	III.	<i>b</i>	<i>e</i> '	<i>g</i> '	<i>b</i> '
„	IV.	<i>a</i>	<i>c</i> '	<i>f</i> '	<i>c</i> ''
„	V.	(as for No. III above)			
„	VI.	<i>a</i>	<i>d</i> '	<i>f</i> <i>♯</i> '	<i>a</i> '

There is also a manuscript cantata for soprano voice and viola d'amore by this composer, where six strings are detailed: *Sur alfin gentil Viola'*

c *g* *c*' *e**b*' *g*' *c*''

These works are sweet and graceful but not of great depth. The tunings of the viola d'amore vary through an infinity of combinations, while the tuning of the sympathetic strings is entirely arbitrary. The tuning for the gut strings in the Vivaldi concerto is

A *d* *a* *d*' *f*' *a*' *d*''

in D minor: about 1740.

SYMPATHETIC STRINGS

Meyerbeer, who uses the viola d'amore in *Les Huguenots*, tunes

$d \quad f\sharp \quad a \quad d' \quad f\sharp' \quad a' \quad d''$

The customary tuning to-day gives the wider range:¹

$A \quad d \quad a \quad d' \quad f\sharp' \quad a' \quad d''$

The viola d'amore has never suffered complete oblivion and, as both solo and orchestral instrument, it found usage throughout the nineteenth century; since then it has figured in the scores of Richard Strauss.

CHAPTER II

THE BARYTON, OR VIOLA DI BORDONE

THE principle of the sympathetic wires was carried into the bass viola da gamba, but here it was extended to form a curious hybrid instrument, known as the BARYTON.² The wire strings were greatly increased in number and were carried behind the neck where they could be struck with the thumb and Klein describes the effect as that of a viola da gamba and a mandorzither playing together.³ The baryton seems to belong chiefly to the middle of the eighteenth century and its active career was comparatively brief. But it has acquired immortality from the fact that Prince Esterhazy, Haydn's patron, was so attached to it that the master composed over one hundred and seventy sonatas for it.

Dr. Wolf quotes 'IX Partien' for the baryton, composed about 1700 by Johann Georg Krause, wherein the bowed strings are tuned

$A \quad d \quad f \quad a \quad d' \quad f'$

Here were sixteen wire strings tuned a semitone apart

¹ This is similar to, but a whole tone higher throughout than, the tuning given by J. J. Klein, *Lehrbuch der Theoretischen Musik*, Leipzig, 1801, p. 130.

² Also called the Viola Paradon.

³ J. J. Klein, *opus cit.*

THE BARYTON

from $d\sharp$ to C and all were available for plucking. The music was written in ordinary viol-lute tablature, with numbers below the lines to indicate the wires to be plucked by the thumb at the back of the neck.¹

The baryton had a slight revival in Germany, the only country in which it ever had any real life, in the mid-nineteenth century.

¹ Johannes Wolf, *Notationskunde* (1919), Vol. II, p. 230. The MS. of this work is at Dresden.



BARYTON, by Simon Schödler Passau, 1782, in the Vienna Collection.

The pegs are arranged in two banks, the one behind the other; the strings pass between the pairs of pegs.

BOOK IV
INDEPENDENT FORMS

CHAPTER I

THE TROMBA MARINA

IN Stillingfleet's commentaries upon Tartini's theory of musical intervals¹ the reader finds considerable attention given to the distinction between notes produced by a single string stopped by direct pressure on a finger-board, and those obtained from an instrument called a Marine Trumpet, or TROMBA MARINA. The first type, similar to the one-stringed fiddle of to-day, is supposed to have been a popular instrument of the Middle Ages.² The second, also a one-stringed bowed instrument, is much more complex and needs description. It consists of a long narrow box with one face made to act as a sound-board; over this passes a long gut string fixed at the lower, and broader, end to a tail-piece and passing at the head over the nut to a tuning peg. Near the lower end there is the peculiar bridge by means of which the characteristic effect is produced. This bridge is so shaped that the pressure of the string is supported directly by one foot, the other foot being carried away from the string by a short arm. This second foot is pointed and rests, without great pressure, upon a small piece of ivory or metal fixed in the sound-board.

When this instrument is played, the bow passes over the string near the nut, while the thumb of the player touches the string, *between the bow and the bridge*, without pressing it down upon the wood, just as a violin player touches his string to produce harmonics. The effect is extraordinary; the

Principles and Power of Harmony (anon.), 1771, pp. 3-44.

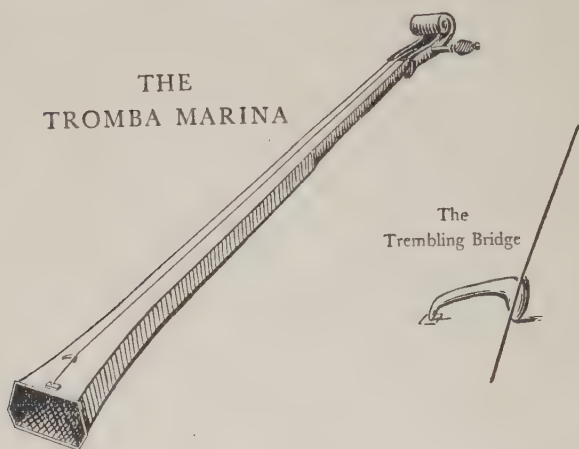
I say 'supposed', because, although this has always been so generally accepted, I find on reflection that I cannot recall an unequivocal piece of evidence for

One cannot dogmatize from names like the *Manicorda una corde* of Calanson in the thirteenth century. Later on, of course, there are definite references, such as that in Mersenne.

INDEPENDENT FORMS

free foot of the bridge vibrates against the sound-board and causes a ringing note which is in every way comparable to that of a trumpet. The correct adjusting and placing of the bridge is a matter of difficulty and requires patience and experience.

There seems to be no direct evidence to show when this



remarkable arrangement was introduced. It is obvious that it was a perfectly familiar object when Hans Memling was painting; and he died in 1495. Both Virdung and Agricola mention and depict the instrument, using the German name Trumscheit, as though it was something which their readers would understand without need of comment. Therefore it seems absurd to say, as so many authorities do, that the trembling bridge was first applied to the bowed monochord at the end of the fifteenth century. Neither is there an

¹ Sebastian Virdung, *Musica Getutscht*, 1511, sig. B iii (recto). Martin Agricola, *Musica instrumentalis deudsch*, 1528, fols. lv and lvi.

THE TROMBA MARINA

evidence that the two instruments were so directly connected. It is yet another case where judgement has been obscured by an inhibition that causes people to assume the absence of musical delicacy and craftsmanship in the late Middle Ages.

The first writer to give a full description of the properties of the tromba marina was Glareanus, who does not as a rule concern himself much with instruments.¹ After the *Dodecachordon* details are frequent and complete, as in Praetorius (1618) and Mersenne (1636). The latter deals at considerable length with the method of playing and with the phenomenon of the harmonics; but he found it difficult to meet with many good players, because of the skill required in the rapid and certain movement of the thumb.²

Encore que l'on puisse donner le nom de Monochorde à cet instrument, neantmoins on l'appelle *Trompette marine*, soit que les matelots l'ayent inuentée, ou qu'elle imite si parfaitement les sons, & les chants de la Trompette ordinaire, qu'il n'y a quasi nul moyen de les distinguer les vns d'auec les autres.³

The origin of the name has provided a happy hunting ground for antiquarians with imaginations. In German literature the tromba marina is sometimes referred to as the Nonnengeige.⁴

The sixteenth-century instrument had frequently two strings, one short, two-thirds the length of the other, to obtain notes that would be missing on a single string, but, according to Mersenne, this had been discarded by his day in favour of the single string, so giving only the natural harmonics of the true trumpet.⁵ Also the earlier form was

Henricus Glareanus, *ΔΩΔΕΚΑΧΟΡΔΟΝ*, Basel, 1547, Lib. I, Cap. XVII pp. 48 and 49).

Harmonie universelle (1636), Livre Quatriesme des Instrumens, p. 219.

Ibid., p. 217.

But there are only shadowy grounds for supposing that it was used in convents. Cf. *Principles and Power of Harmony* (1771), p. 16:

... the defect of certain notes on that instrument [the Common Trumpet], which are just the same as are wanting on the Trumpet Marine.

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smaller and could be held comfortably over the shoulder with the head downwards;¹ but the seventeenth-century instrument was very much larger and heavier. Randle Holmes, in his *Academy of Armory*, says that it was '2 yards and a half or 3 yards high',² but this seems a trifle exaggerated, as seven feet is about the maximum length of the full-sized instrument. Mersenne advises players to hold the head against the breast while the end is supported by a wall. Another feature was added about this time, in the sympathetic strings inside the sound-box. Randle Holmes (*loc. cit.*) speaks of four wires each 'screwed up to the same musicall height as the great gut string is', but this number was increased to fifteen or even more.

Mr. Pepys having arrived too late at Charing Cross to see *Polichinelli*, went on to hear a certain Monsieur Prin play upon the Trump-Marine. The performance aroused the diarist to enthusiasm, but he was disappointed in his efforts to look into the open end of the instrument, to see whence came the 'whole concert of chords' which seemed, like an echo, to continue at each pause.³ Shortly after this, according to an extract quoted by Hawkins from the *London Gazette*, No. 961 of Feb. 4, 1674/5, there was 'a concert of four Trumpets-Marine', but the statement that they were never before heard in England is discounted by Pepys's evidence.⁴

In the manuscript of Randle Holmes's work already mentioned there is a slip pasted in to form part of folio 209, upon which a second description of the instrument is given. From this we learn that the single string ('of beaste's gutts') was of the thickness 'of an ordinary two-peny cord', whatever that may have been. The compiler adds:

¹ For an excellent representation of this, see Hans Memling's group of angels in the Antwerp Museum, reproduced in *Musical Instruments in Pictures*, p. 12.

² B.M. Harl. MS. 2034, fol. 207 verso.

³ *Pepys's Diary*, 24 Oct., 1667.

⁴ Sir John Hawkins, *A General History of Music*, Book XVII, Chap. CLVIII.

THE TROMBA MARINA

Those that are skilled in playing upon it, they will counterfeit the sound of any kind of musick, whether wind or stringed Instruments; principally all sorts of the sounding of a Trumpett.

In the early eighteenth century, the better sort of *Trumpet Marines* are so contrived, that the sometimes 12, sometimes 15, sometimes 18 wire strings drawn length ways within that instrument, are all tuned *unison*, or higher *Tredecime*, to the great *Monochord*.¹

Clearly there was no fixed idea as to the number of sympathetic strings.

Canon Galpin² mentions a manuscript sonata written for the tromba marina in the seventeenth century by Don Lorenzo de Castro, with florid passages in quick time. The gut string here is tuned to *C* and the natural harmonic series of notes from *c'* to *a''* is employed. A publisher's advertisement exists of 1699 announcing 'A *Second Book* for the new instrument called the Mock Trumpet', but no copy of this, or of the postulate *First Book*, is known. About this time the special properties of the tromba marina had received attention in serious quarters.³

The plain bowed monochord did not entirely die; it lived on as a drone for simple folk in rustic music and was known as the Bumbass and the Basse de Flandres. It has revived to-day as the one-stringed fiddle so popular with street performers, a form that has long existed in Japan. In the past ages it was sometimes transfigured into the Bladder and String, and upon this the lamented George Chirgwin was the last great virtuoso.

¹ J. F. De La Fond, *A New System of Music*, 1724, p. 46.

² *Old English Instruments of Music* (1910), p. 98.

³ *Transactions of the Philosophical Society*, 1692.

CHAPTER II

THE HURDY-GURDY

§ i.

CONTRARY to popular belief, the HURDY-GURDY is not a mechanical pipe-organ; it is a true member of the family of bowed instruments, but one in which the bow has become of infinite length, being formed by the circumference of a wheel.¹ The notes are made, not by pressing on the strings directly with the fingers, but by means of wooden, or ivory, keys that are applied from below by the player's left hand, falling away under gravity as soon as released.

In the Middle Ages the hurdy-gurdy was known as the Organistrum. This instrument was large and required the services of two players, the one to turn the wheel and the other to make the notes. In the earliest forms depicted or described there are usually three strings, and the body is either viol-shaped or like a long box. Gerbert has printed a short treatise upon the organistrum which was written by Odo of Cluny in the first half of the tenth century,² from which it appears that the range at that time was a diatonic scale of one octave. For long this instrument was associated with Church use, and it is a common object in the religious art of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; but the rapid development of the organ, especially in its smaller forms, led to the disuse of the more simple organistrum. From high estate it fell to lowly friends; it became shortened for the convenience of a single player and it gained the name of

¹ See Plate XI.

² *Quomodo organistrum construatur*; in Vol. I (p. 303) of *Scriptores Ecclesiastici* 1784. The constant use of the word 'fistula' in this work worries me; unless it is used for 'note' (i.e. taken from the organ) I am at a loss to understand it. This applies also to Notker's *De Mensura Fistularum Organicarum* (p. 101 of the same vol.).

THE HURDY-GURDY

Symphony.¹ Yet in paintings of even the early sixteenth century the symphony is occasionally seen in the hands of angels.²

The nomenclature took on a variety of forms. Rota is often found in early Latin works for organistrum.³ In Virdung the illustration is labelled Lyra and in Agricola the Germanic form, Leyer, is used, though it is usual to find this generic word qualified by some rustic adjective, as in Praetorius, Bawren Lyra. Drehleyer and Radleyer are also found, indicating respectively a crank and a wheel. Mersenne calls it Lyra, in his Latin work, and Symphonie or Vielle in French; he describes the instrument at great length⁴ and here we see, as in Praetorius, the presence of two bourdon strings, or drones, lying near the belly and tuned in unison or octave. Mersenne shows two melody strings in unison, and though his illustration is of a small instrument with only ten keys, he says that these may be as many as forty-nine, or even more. He would also have experiment made with six bourdons tuned to a common chord. As Vielle had earlier other meanings, this name is sometimes found as Vielle à roue. It is not until the eighteenth century that the familiar name, Hurdy-gurdy, is applied to the instrument.

The great age of the vielle was that of Louis XV in France, when jaded powder and patch invented a hot-house rusticity. Then it assumed all shapes, lute, viol, and guitar; or sometimes fantastic. And little baby hurdy-gurdies of this period are also found. That this was a new fashion, whereby the indigent blind were robbed of what had become their

¹ This name should not be confused with the later German use of the same word for the Virginals. In early French literature it is sometimes found as 'chifonie'.

² A very clear example of the Symphony of about 1500 may be seen in *Musical Instruments in Pictures*, p. 23.

³ 'Rote', found in English of the time of Chaucer, means a harp, being a form of 'Chrotta'.

⁴ *Harmonie universelle* (1636), Livre Quatriesme des Instrumens, Prop. XII, p. 211.

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particular instrument, may be seen from the foreword to one of those books of instruction, now so excessively rare, which were published at this period:

A MA COMERE.

Madame,

Depuis que MA COMERE a quitté sa Quenouille; Qu'Elle a abandonné le goût d'une Lecture amusante; Qu'enfin, Elle s'est dérobée à ses Comperes l'enjouement d'une Conversation remplie de vivacité & d'esprit: Depuis, dis-je, qu'Elle a considéré la VIELE comme un Instrument capable d'occuper sa dévotion, il n'est pas étonnant qu'à son exemple, les Clairs-Voyants courent sus aux pauvres Aveugles, pour leur envahir un Bien qui leur étoit Propre, & qui leur appartenait sans aucuns Concurrents. Cependant, ce nouveau Bien, cultivé par l'envie de plaire, s'est enrichi de Perles & de Chants séduisants, qui ont fait naître les Pièces, & les petites Instructions qu'elles ont occasionnées: Je les présente toutes à MA COMERE, avec promesse de n'en laisser échapper aucune, sans lui en faire le même hommage, persuadé que je suis, du gré qu'Elle m'en saura, puisque je n'ay rien plus à cœur que de lui prouver combien, de tous les Comperes du monde, son Compere est le plus franc, le plus véritable, & le plus zélé.

The tuning is described for the standard six strings. There were two melody strings, in unison, known as the Chantrelles; and four drones, the Trompette, the Bourdon (gimped with silver wire), and a pair in unison called the Mouches. The fifth and the octave were the only intervals employed, and, irrespective of pitch, the tuning would be as follows:²

Chanterelles	<i>g'</i>
Trompette	<i>c'</i>
Bourdon	<i>c</i>
Mouches	<i>g</i>

¹ *Pièces choisies pour La Vièle, à l'usage des Commencans; avec des Instructions pour le toucher, & pour entretenir cet Instrument, Nouvelle Edition; 4to, Paris, 1742. Labeled with a * on the title-page.*

² *Ibid.*, sig. A ii (verso).

THE HURDY-GURDY

Elaborate instructions are given for the setting of the keys and of the strings in relation to the wheel, in order that the intonation and tone shall be true throughout; for the players must be able to do this themselves to the instrument,

à moins qu'ils ne veulent qu'il soit toujours chez l'Ouvrier.

The notes given above are used in this work and the compass is two octaves, g' to g''' , but the author speaks of a modified form in which an additional half-octave below g' was obtained.

Those who have not heard an expert player using the hurdy-gurdy can hardly imagine how expressive it can be made to sound. All sorts of effects can be obtained, as staccatos and tremolos, and both hands contribute to a variety of tone. Not only was it a solo instrument, and one to be treated seriously, but it had also a place in concerted music. An example of this may be quoted in the following title-page:

Huitiesme Œuvre
de Mr. Naudot
Six Fêtes Rustiques pour Musettes, Vieles
Flutes, Hautbois & Violons
avec la Basse ¹

and the compositions look decidedly jolly.

The hurdy-gurdy has still a vigorous life in southern France.

§ ii.

A form of quasi hurdy-gurdy is shown by Praetorius, wherein the strings are free to be stopped by the fingers as in a violin, though nothing seems to be known as to the use of this arrangement. The converse of this, wherein the strings were played with a bow, but stopped by falling keys, enjoyed

¹ No date is given in this work, which occurs in a volume made up of different compositions, all of the first half of the eighteenth century: appearances point to this part being about 1725.

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a wide popularity. This was the keyed fiddle, a familiar instrument in the early sixteenth century, as the illustration and reference in Agricola show, and one which is still used in Sweden for country festivities at the present time.¹

§ iii.

The most complete application of mechanism to the bowed string is to be found in those attempts to combine an entire consort in a single keyboard instrument. How far back this goes it is impossible to say, but such an idea had certainly been devised in theory in the sixteenth century by Vincenzo Galilei and others, although Praetorius remarks that he does not believe any of their schemes would have worked in practice.² The earliest certain instrument is that described and illustrated by Praetorius; and, as it was obviously well established when that author was writing, its construction can be assumed to have taken place not later than 1610, for he quotes a long account of its properties taken from a small book published in that year.³ This famous instrument known as the 'Nürnbergisch Geigenwerck', was the production of one Hans Hayde, of the town which gave the name to his work. In appearance it was like a single manual harpsichord; the strings passed above five wheels, which were rotated by means of a pedal. The keyboard operated upon levers, by means of which the strings were brought into contact with the resined edges of the wheels, sounding as in the hurdy-gurdy, but only when desired. It was claimed that not only could a full consort be played, but that expression effects were possible, of which the vibrato is naturally the most obvious.

¹ A recent photograph of a player upon the keyed fiddle appeared in *The National Geographic Magazine* (U.S.A.), Vol. LIV, No. 4, October, 1928 (p. 447). The instrument is here held across the knees.

² *Syntagma Musicum*, Vol. II (1618), p. 67.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 67 et seq., and *Sciagraphia* (1620), Plate III.

THE CRWTH

It is impossible here to give even a summary of the long account of this instrument; indeed, it is needless, for it was without a curiosity that indicated the fate of its numerous successors of the following centuries.¹

CHAPTER III

THE CRWTH, OR CROWD

THE one instrument remaining to claim attention is not only isolated from all others in its descent and use, but is also conspicuously absent from all the evidential data of our period. Hence the story of the CRWTH is almost entirely a matter for antiquarians. But since this instrument has been forced, by many writers, into the genealogies of the violin, the viola, or the viol, the writer must state his conviction that such association is quite wrong. Back to the most remote point of its evolution, the crwth was of entirely northern European provenance, and it remained untouched by the influence of the south or beyond.

In our literature of the Middle Ages the crowd is a common figure, frequently in company with 'fiddle', thus indicating that it was no synonym for that uncertain word. But during the sixteenth century, although 'crowd' still often appears, there are signs of doubt that it might not at times have been used more loosely:

Palsgrave in 1530 explained the Crowd as a 'Rebecq', and certain John Hogan, in the year 1537, was reprimanded for singing lewd ballads with a crowd or fyddyll.²

Herr Curt Sachs, in his *Reallexikon* (1913), pp. 360, 361, lists fifty-one inventions, after that of Hayde, between 1625 and 1909. He quotes contemporary accounts of two French instruments, one made by le Voir (1742) and the other by le Gay (1762). The striking advertisement of Baudet's 'Piano-quatuor' (1873), with its octopus-like arms, is not yet forgotten; and the instrument itself had qualities that do not merit entire oblivion. Francis Galpin, *Old English Instruments of Music*, p. 79.

INDEPENDENT FORMS

There were no frets on the neck, and the angle at which the bridge was placed must have made the playing of anything but plain chords a difficult matter. Nevertheless, there is evidence in plenty that the crwth was very widely used even by the Court, from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries. We are quite ignorant of its tuning and the nature of its music at that period. Later it seems to have survived solely in Wales, where it was certainly played as late as the early nineteenth century, though genuine examples of even this date are exceedingly rare.

There are certain manuscripts in the British Museum containing music for the crwth, written in a sort of semi-tablature of the alphabetical notation. Attempts have been made to reproduce this music with results that, if the notation has been correctly read, are hardly encouraging to any further study of the subject. For the present, however, we prefer to stay our hand, for the crwth has lately been receiving the attention of one or two workers whose practical outlook will ensure a thorough and unbiased examination of all the material.

EPILOGUE

EPILOGUE

§ i.

WE have now examined in detail that picture of which a general impression was given in the Prologue. At the end of this long and, it is to be feared, sometimes rather dull road, it may be asked what goal has been reached of musical value to-day, apart from historical information. The answer falls under two heads: the qualities of the instruments, and those of the music written for them.

§ ii.

Association with certain of the instruments, in both theory and practice, has shown them to be completely individual in their qualities and perfectly adapted to express all that can be demanded of those qualities. They are not to be replaced by the members of other families. As their particular nature inspired a music of their own in the past, so they may again lead to compositions suited to them, expressing a different age.

It cannot be assumed that those instruments yet to be recovered in practice, such as the lyras, are of less importance than those we know; that their characters are equally individual and unrepresented to-day is obvious from theoretical knowledge.

In some cases the qualities have an importance in a social direction. The viols have a technique which enables any musical person, though untrained instrumentally, to play simple things upon them perfectly after a comparatively short training. The parts of some of the finest consorts are not technically difficult, whatever demands they may make upon musicianship. Therefore a player who has not opportunity to acquire advanced technique may take part with confidence in chamber music of the highest order.

EPILOGUE

This is the direct converse of the position of the chamber music of the violin family in the 'classical' and later periods.

Hence the viols offer practical encouragement for amateurs to make good music themselves, instead of paying others to make it for them.

§ iii.

In the two and a half centuries which we have discussed, there was produced a truly vast quantity of music for the bowed instruments. In character this output has a range to suit every possible taste and temperament. We may reject the bad, the mediocre, and even the merely good; there will still be left a residue of the highest class which will enrich the resources of chamber music tenfold.

To-day we are still in the course of the recovery of these dormant voices and their music. Already the stage is past when it is regarded as a lifeless antiquarian pursuit, but we must look still more to the future and guard even against any spirit that shall suggest the revival of a period. When the first flush of welcome is over, the best of these works must be taken back soberly into our midst, upon the same terms as all other good music. For in music there should be neither old nor new, nor any judgement but as between the good and the bad.

APPENDIX I

BOISGELOU'S CATALOGUE

I am indebted to Monsieur Lionel de la Laurencie, not only for the quotation from Boisgelou's *Catalogue*, but also for precise details of that interesting work; I take this opportunity of recording my gratitude for all the trouble he has taken on my behalf. The following is an extract from his letter to me :

P. L. Roualle de Boisgelou a laissé un *Catalogue des livres de la Bibliothèque du roi qui traitent de la Musique*. Ce Catalogue est *manuscrit* et porte à la Bibliothèque Nationale la cote: *Réserve V^{me} 26*. Il est *in folio*.

Boisgelou a laissé en outre, *tous manuscrits & in f^o*, les ouvrages suivants:

- (a) *Division du Catalogue de musique pratique*. (*Réserve V^{me} 23*.)
- (b) *Table alphabétique de la musique*. (*Réserve V^{me} 24*.)
- (c) *Table alphabétique des auteurs théoriciens*. (*Réserve V^{me} 25*.)
- (d) *Table biographique des auteurs et compositeurs de Musique dont les ouvrages sont à la Bibliothèque du roi*. (*Réserve V^{me} 22*.)

Le *Catalogue des livres de la Musique du roi* porte la date de 1787. La *Division du Catalogue de Musique pratique* porte la date de 1803.

C'est à ce dernier ouvrage (*Catalogue de la Musique pratique*) que j'ai emprunté la citation figurant à la page 49 de mon article: 'Deux violistes célèbres', paru dans le N^o de décembre 1908, de la Revue S.I.M.

Ce volume n'est pas *paginé*; les diverses compositions musicales qu'il énumère sont classées sous des rubriques générales, *orgue, clavecin, violon*, etc., et chacune de ces compositions constitue un article portant un *numéro d'ordre*.

La citation faite par moi forme un petit alinéa (autographe de Boisgelou) situé *au dessous* de la rubrique: *Dessus et Pardessus de viole*, et avant le N^o 2746, qui est le premier de cette rubrique.

Paris.

16 October 1928.

APPENDIX II

EXTRACTS FROM AGRICOLA'S *MUSICA INSTRUMENTALIS DEUDSCH*

i.

(see p. 163 of text.)

Es folget die dritte art der Geigen
Die soltu (radt ich) auch nicht vermeiden.
Sie sind cleiner denn die vorigen gestalt
Auff yhn werden nur drey Seyten gazzalt.
Und gemenlich one bünd erfunden
Idoch sag ich dir zu dissen¹ stunden
Das es one bünd schwer ist zu fassen
Darumb soltu das nicht faren lassen.
Sondern ub dich erst auff die bündisch art
So magstu darauff recht werden gelart.
Wiltu darnach die bünde nicht leiden
So magstu sie mit eim messer weg schneiden
Und geigen wie dirs ym hertzen gefelt.
(Edn. 1528/9, fol. xlix recto.)

ii.

(see p. 164 of text.)

Weiter wil ich dir anzeigen
Das ander geschlecht der Geigen
Welche im Polerland gmein sind
Drauff die seiten gestimpt die quint.
Und werden auff ein ander art
Gegriffen / dann wie vor gelart /
Mit den negeln rürt man sie an
Drumb die seiten weit von ein stan.
Mich düncket sie lauten gantz rein
Auch das sie viel subtiler sein

¹ 'diesen' in later editions.

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Künstlicher und lieblicher gantz
Dann die Welschen mit resonantz.
Das ichs aber subtiler nenn
Ein jeder bey sich selbs erkenn
Ob nicht ein seit die man berürt
Mit negeln / wird heller gespürt
Dann eine mit fingern weich
Odder anderm thun diesen gleich /
Denn was weichlich ist / dempfft den klang
Und was hart / macht klerer den gsang.
Auch schafft man mit dem zittern frey /
Das süsser laut die melodey /
Denn auff den andern geschen mag
Hör weiter zu / was ich dir sag
Dieweil sie one bünd gemacht
Wird es etwas schwerer geacht
Die finger drauff zu applicirn
Und zwischen den seiten recht zfürn /
Doch ist nichts so schwer auff erden
Es kan durch vleis erlangt werden.

(Edn. 1545, fols. 42 verso and 43 recto)

iii.

(see p. 165 of text.)

Du solt weiter mercken darbey
Das noch ein art der Geigen sey
Auch auff Polisch die quint gestimpt
Doch sichs mit greiffen anders zimpt /
Wir hernach wird eröffnet bas
Auch spür ich gemeiniglich das
Jeder wit jtz darmit umbgehn
Und wenig den kragen verstehn /
Auff welchem das rechte fundament
Ist verborgen und gantz behend /
Drumb wil ich dir fein entdecken
Und was verborgen / dar strecken

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Auff diesen Geigen one bund [*sic*]
Alhie vnten jnn kurtzer stund /
Jnn den figurñ geoffenbart
Findestu klar beyderley art /
Drumb sie haben einerley brauch
Die Polschen und die kleinen auch /
Allein das die Polacken zwar
Greiffen zwischen die seiten gar /
Und sie mit den negeln rürn an
Da sie bünd recht solten stan.

(Edn. 1545, fol. 45 recto and verso.)

APPENDIX III

EXTRACTS FROM GANASSI'S

REGOLA RUBERTINA

In Book III, Part II (Chap. I), an epitome has been given of the final chapter of Ganassi's treatise on the viols, in which he speaks of using only three strings. The full text of this chapter is given below, and with it a complete translation. It has been thought advisable to add a translation of the chapter immediately preceding, i.e. Chapter XXII of the second volume, which deals with the use of four strings only. For these translations I am indebted to the kindness of my erudite friend Mr. Ulric Gantillon, who has expended enormous pains to achieve a result which makes both literary and musical sense and still preserves the spirit of the original. A glance at the Italian text of Chapter XXIII will indicate the difficulties with which one is faced in understanding the true meanings of technical works of this period, when no previous knowledge of these meanings is assumed; and, for an honest investigation of the subject, it is essential that all the evidence should be approached in this empty-minded spirit. The difficulties found in Ganassi are typical of those found in other languages during the sixteenth century. As Mr. Gantillon says,

the obscurity of the original is greatly increased by the excessive pleonasm, the extreme laxity of co-ordination, the complete

APPENDIX III

disregard of agreement between nouns and verbs or predicates and of sequence of tenses; and not least by the use of the same words to denominate the individual strings on a viol and also the different sizes of viols.

Briefly, Chapter XXII tells us that it is sometimes convenient to remove the two high strings of a viol (named respectively the *Canto* and the *Sotana*), leaving the *Mezzana*, the *Tenor*, the *Bordon*, and the *Basso*. The tuning of these four strings is then readjusted so that the major third lies between the lowest pair, the *Bordon* and the *Basso*, the others being a fourth apart. The three voices are then tuned so that there is a fifth between each.² Ganassi's way of saying this is as follows:

Mode of Tuning the Viols with four strings only.

Chapter XXII.

And in order not to leave unpaid the promise to show you the tuning of the Viols in such a way as to secure the advantage of playing everything which is usually found in composition limited to the diatonic system, not merely with the tuning of six and of five strings, but also with four and with three only you shall now have this debt paid you. And first: regarding the tuning of the said viols with six or five strings, there is no need for me to say aught but what is said and done on the 'shift chart' (diagram of tuning)³ for the manner of the first and second and third tunings which helps you in playing with six strings, since it is usual to play a fourth higher which would make up for playing with five strings;⁴ hence we have no need

¹ Mr. Gantillon gives the derivation of *bordone* as a corruption of *βαρύτονος* deep-sounding, the difference between 'barytone' and 'bass' being purely conventional as to precise range.

² This will be seen in the tuning for four strings given on p. 164 *supra*.

³ *Rubertina*: Mr. Gantillon suggests *shift chart* as the best possible equivalent of this word. It is obviously Ganassi's word for the various diagrams of tuning giving notes and tablature; and, for this reason, I have added the descriptive phrase.

⁴ These tunings are given in the first volume of Ganassi's work (see *supra* p. 12). There is a passing reference to five strings in the final chapter of Vol. I.

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to discuss more than the playing of four or three strings only, as we want before all else to have the advantage of playing things composed in the approved fashion, which at present is usually with four strings only per viol' [. . . la uia ordenata che al p'sente e usitada cō quattro sole corde p viola];¹ only it is understood that the said four strings are the Basso, the Bordon, the Tenor, and the Mezzana, as such strings seldom break or need replacing if there is a shortage, whereas of the Sotana and the Canto strings there is often a want and they easily break; so you will have to tune the bass viol to the guiding pitch [la piu degna parte]² as is shown on the 'shift chart' (tuning diagram) of this method; its Bordon will be tuned a third above the Basso string and then the Tenor will be tuned a fourth above the Bordon string, and the Mezzana, again, will itself be tuned a fourth above the Tenor string; and this tuning, again, will be done in such a manner on the tenor viol, and again on the alto and the treble, that is as solo instruments; in consort

and another in the Prologue to Vol. II; apart from these, Ganassi has not spoken before of this use of five strings only.

What exactly he is trying to convey here, I confess I do not know; if the top string of the viol is removed, then naturally the viol with six strings has a range a fourth above that of the viol with five strings. But I am not sure that this is his meaning; and it is possible that here there is a hint of a solution of the problem of that low pitch given by Gerle, Zacconi, and Cerone, which was discussed *supra*, pp. 40 et seq. Yet compare the following passage from Ganassi's Prologue to Vol. II:

Et la terza acordatura sie il tenor e alto in quarta di sopra il basso & il sopran ancora lui in quarta alta dal tenor & contr'alto che uien a esserte in settima di sopra'al basso (see *supra*, p. 13), dappoi hauete la uia dil sonar una quarta piu alta della prima acordatura & appresso hauete il modo di pratticar il manico in parte per la uia de canti fermi, e di piu hauete ancora alcuni recercari in bon proposito.

¹ I can only say that this statement leaves me stunned! But compare Agricola's passage on this point (*supra*, pp. 162 and 164). As it cannot possibly have reference to violins, I assume a fashion in certain places at this period (approx. 1530-1550) of using viols with four strings only. The complete absence of other, and later, evidence shows that it was not of lasting importance.

² Literally, of course, 'the worthiest part'. I imagine that he means a sort of constant norm to which the tuning of the other parts is referred. Compare Vol. I, Chap. X, *Qual parte son piu degna*, in which he says that the bass is 'la piu degna parte di tutte l'altre'. See also the opening of Cap. VIII, Vol. I.

APPENDIX III

playing the tenor and alto will be a fifth above the bass, and the treble again will be tuned accordingly a fifth above the tenor and alto; and if the viols did not have in themselves this mutual relationship of strings to make them capable of such a tuning, you should study the description mentioned on the 'shift chart' (tuning diagram), as set forth in Chapter X,¹ which discourse gives instructions for tuning the viols, and in order that you may know this tuning its effect is to make the playing of everything as easy as possible; and if you had six strings you would be able to employ such a tuning, but the parts will have to be tuned by fifths as are the tenor and alto above the bass, and the treble, again, a fifth above the tenor and alto; so that it follows that you will proceed according to the rule directed by the figure which will keep to the same mode as is in the 'shift chart' (tuning diagram),² but be warned that only against the strings of the bass viol will be placed letters indicating the names of the strings, and on the other parts, as the strings of the tenor and treble, will be the figures of the intervals to denote the tuning of the strings: that is, whether by themselves or all together, the tuning by fifths is to be understood,³ as has been said before, so that the bass will serve for the rest with regard to understanding the names of the strings, and the other parts will have to be referred to the bass for their tuning; that is, of their strings one by one. Again mark this, that you will have the advantage by means of this rule here figured of being able to play anything a fifth lower which will be in this mode every time that you see the composition arranged for a part that is too high.⁴

This is not the whole of the chapter, but the remainder is an

¹ In Vol. I; but the diagrams actually come after Chap. XII. This gives an honest rendering of the original text. It might more intelligibly be expressed thus: 'And if there should be any doubt in your mind, as to this being a relative distance of interval inherent in the very nature of the viols, study the working out of it on the detailed shift-chart.'

² i.e. the diagram of four strings only, which accompanies this chapter.

³ Referring, of course, to the pitch of the several sizes of viols.

⁴ This, he says later in the chapter, refers to 'the tuning of the said viols by themselves alone', i.e. not in consort.

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explanation of the transposition in terms of 'C sol, fa, ut', and 'F, fa, ut', followed by a very redundant recapitulation.

I should like to record my admiration of Mr. Gantillon's effort; it is one thing to get the general drift of Ganassi's intention, but quite a different task to translate him in a manner which gives a faithful concept of the original. I am very greatly indebted to him.

Moda della acordatura per il sonar solo con tre corde.

Cap. XXIII.

Hor dapoi che si ha accomodado della acordatura & modo del sonar cō q̃ttro corde sole. El si seguiterà adonque lo acordar le Viole al seruitio delle tre sole corde, per tãto hauerai questo che lo suo acordar sera in questo modo medemo de quanto lo acordarli incompagnia cioe in quinta alta el tenor e alto dal basso & il sopran ancora lui in quinta disopra al tenor & contr'alto si cõe e lo acordo delle quattro corde, ma p si soli si hauerà dimutar la sua acordatura che sera in questo modo secōdo che lo acordo delle quattro corde e il bordon in terza sopra la corda contrabassa & il resto delle corde in quarta alta una da l'altra, questo acordo delle ditte tre corde sole sera acordate tutte in quinta alta una da l'altra che sera il bordon dal basso & el tenor dal bordon & di questa acordatura sene potrà seruire li sonatori de viola da braccio senza tasti per essere acordati alla sua maniera, ma le ben il uero chel sonar suo non e corretto quanto nella prattica delle deda, pero io dico chel ge sera de molto proposito alla sua prattica di quãto il gouerno delle deda elqual auertir e causado da la regola del sonar el violon fora delli tasti come hai nel Capitolo XII.¹ siche seguita per la regola in figura² accio non si manchi della parte promessa.

¹ A misprint for XX. The twentieth chapter of Vol. II deals with playing both the viol and the lute 'at the extremity of the finger-board beyond the frets'. See *supra*, p. 76.

² The diagram of tuning: not reproduced here. See *supra*, pp. 169 and 170.

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(Translation.)

Mode of tuning to play with three strings only.

Chapter XXIII.

Now that we have adapted ourselves to the tuning and mode of playing with four strings only, we must follow on to treat of the tuning of the Viols for the use of three strings only. You will have them tuned in such a way that it will be the identical mode as far as tuning for consort-playing is concerned, that is, the tenor and alto a fifth above the bass, and the treble, again, itself a fifth above the tenor and alto, as is the tuning of the four strings. But by themselves you will have to change their tuning so as to be like the tuning of the four strings, and the bordon a third above the bass string and the rest of the strings a fourth one above the other.¹ This tuning of the said three strings only will be that they are all tuned a fifth one above the other, that is, the Bordon above the Basso, and the Tenor above the Bordon. This tuning can be employed by players of the 'viola da brazo senza tasti'² so as to be in tune according to their practice. But the real truth is that their playing is not correct as regards the exercise of the fingers.³ This warning is brought about by the rule for playing the viol beyond the frets,⁴ as you have it in Chapter XII [XX], so that it finds its place here by the rules marked in the figures, in order that nothing may be missing from the portion promised.

¹ This seems to be a double recapitulation of the tuning with four strings, as 'il resto delle corde' must refer to more than one string.

² i.e. 'the viol without frets that is played over the arm'. For reasons given in Book III, Part II, Chap. I, this may mean either a rebec or an early violin, but there is no evidence to define which is intended. Personally, I believe it refers to the rebec.

³ Compare the passages in Agricola: see *supra*, p. 165.

⁴ He means, of course, the exact opposite: 'this warning causes me to remind you of the rule for playing, etc. . . .'

APPENDIX IV

TABLATURE

The word Tablature has been somewhat loosely applied to any form of notation which is not constructed by musical notes on a staff. It would be preferable to confine its application to those notations which indicate, not a succession of musical intervals, but a series of mechanical operations of the hand. The whole subject will be dealt with at length in a later volume, but a brief account of the system used for the viols, with especial reference to the lyra viol, will assist the understanding of certain chapters in this volume.

Consider a single string on a viol: each fret on the neck marks an advance in pitch of one semitone. Let the nut be indicated by the letter *a*, the first fret by *b*, the second by *c*, and so on. Then *a* will represent the note to which the open string is tuned, while *b* will represent the note obtained if the string is stopped on the first fret, and so on. The same is applied to the other strings.

If, then, we rule six parallel lines, each representing a string, and upon these lines place a series of letters corresponding to the frets which, when the respective strings are stopped on them, give the notes required by the composition, we shall have created a visual symbol of the mechanical operations of the left hand in producing those notes. For clarity it was often found convenient to place the letters between, instead of on, lines; in this case each space represents a string.

It will be seen that until the *intervals* between each open string have been defined, the symbols will have no musical meaning; and until the *actual note* of one string is fixed, the musical meaning will have no definite pitch. Therefore the relative tuning must always be given, even if the pitch is left more or less approximate.

Example: standard tuning of the viol:

Treble string	<i>a</i>
Second „	<i>f a</i>
Third „	<i>f a</i>
Fourth „	<i>e a</i>
Fifth „	<i>f a</i>
Bass „	<i>f</i>

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This indicates that if the second string is stopped on the *f* fret, five semitones above its open note, it will be in unison with the top string; the same applies to all the others, with the exception of the fourth string, which has only to be stopped on the *e* fret, four semitones above its open note, to bring it in unison with the third string. Thus the intervals are: a fourth; a fourth; a major third; a fourth; and a fourth. If the top string is tuned to *d'*, the normal bass viol pitch, the tuning will be

D G c e a d'

It will be seen that the same note may be taken upon different strings for convenience in obtaining combinations of notes that would be otherwise impossible.

Time was indicated by strokes, to which tails were added for diminution, placed above the letters.

Some countries used numbers, instead of letters, to indicate the frets, the open string being 0 or 1 according to the system used.

England, France, and (later) Germany arranged the lines with the *treble* string at the top. Italian and, with a few exceptions, Spanish, composers wrote their tablature (in numbers) with the *bass* string at the top and the *treble* at the bottom.

Germany in the sixteenth century constructed tablature for the viols and lute on a different principle, in which each intersection of strings and fret had its individual symbol. This enabled them to dispense with lines and bars; it is confusing to read.

APPENDIX V

DIMENSIONS OF INSTRUMENTS AND BOWS

I. INSTRUMENTS.

The measurements given are as follows:

A=length of string between bridge and nut.

B=greatest depth of ribs.

Plate I. *Bass Viola da Gamba.*

Property of W. J. H. Whittall, Esq.

Label: ~~Hanss~~ *Vohar.*

Back: arched.

A= $27\frac{1}{4}$ inches (69.2 cm.). B= $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches (11.8 cm.).

Plate II. *Tenor Viola da Gamba.*

Property of Arnold Dolmetsch, Esq.

No label or brand.

Back: flat.

A= $19\frac{1}{2}$ inches (49.5 cm.). B=4 inches (10.2 cm.).

Plate III. *Alto Viola da Gamba.*

Property of Arnold Dolmetsch, Esq.

Label: *John Strong, Sommerset.*

Back: flat.

A=16 inches (40.6 cm.). B= $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches (6.4 cm.).

Plate IV. *Treble Viola da Gamba.*

Property of Marco Pallis, Esq.

No label or brand.

Back: flat.

A=14 inches (35.6 cm.). B= $3\frac{1}{8}$ inches (8 cm.).

Plate V. *Treble Viola da Gamba.*

Property of Arnold Dolmetsch, Esq.

Label: *Feyzeau à Bordeaux, 1753.* Branded.

Back: flat.

A= $13\frac{1}{4}$ inches (33.7 cm.). B=3 inches (7.6 cm.).

Plate IX. *Lyra da Braccia.*

Künsthistorische Museum, Vienna.

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Details after Schlosser, No. 94:

Label: *Joannes Andree. Veronen.*

[*adi 12 ?*] . . . *uosto* (agosto?).

1511

Length overall, 80.5 cm. ($31\frac{3}{4}$ inches); length of body 51.5 cm. ($20\frac{1}{4}$ inches). Width of upper part, 22.5 cm. ($8\frac{3}{8}$ inches); width of lower part, 27.5 cm. ($10\frac{3}{4}$ inches). Depth of ribs, 4.5 cm. ($1\frac{3}{4}$ inches).

These measurements give a length from the bridge (as placed) to nut of approximately 17 inches (43.2 cm.).

The back is arched, but in a fantastic design.

Plate X. *Viola d'amore.*

Property of Arnold Dolmetsch, Esq.

No label or brand.

Back: arched.

A = $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches (36.8 cm.). B = 2 inches (5.1 cm.).

Plate XI. *Hurdy-gurdy.*

Property of Arnold Dolmetsch, Esq.

Lute-shaped body.

Length overall = $26\frac{1}{2}$ inches (67.3 cm.).

2. Bows.

Property of the author.

The measurement given is the length of the free hair.

Plate VII.

a. *Treble viol bow.*

Fluted. 23 inches (58.4 cm.). Weight, $1\frac{3}{4}$ oz.

Raised line in hollow of flutings for $9\frac{1}{4}$ inches (23.5 cm.) from tip.

b. *Treble viol bow.*

Fluted. $20\frac{3}{4}$ inches (52.7 cm.). Weight, $1\frac{13}{16}$ oz.

Raised line in hollow of flutings for $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches (16.5 cm.) from tip. (A comparison of this length with the corresponding portion of bow (a) suggests that bow (b) was originally about the same length as bow (a). When found however, the inner side of the stick was encrusted with

APPENDIX V

deposited resin dust; and the marked wear of the flutings, near the nut, proves that it had had much usage, held viol manner, in its present state.)

c. Bass viol bow.

Branded: *I. S.*

Circular cross-section. $23\frac{3}{4}$ inches (60.3 cm.). Weight, $2\frac{1}{8}$ oz.

Narrow flutings for 6 inches (15.2 cm.) from inner end of nut.

d. Alto or Tenor viol bow.

Octagonal near nut. $23\frac{3}{4}$ inches (60.3 cm.). Weight, $1\frac{15}{16}$ oz.

e. Violoncello bow.

Octagonal near nut. $23\frac{1}{2}$ inches (59.7 cm.). Weight, $2\frac{5}{16}$ oz.

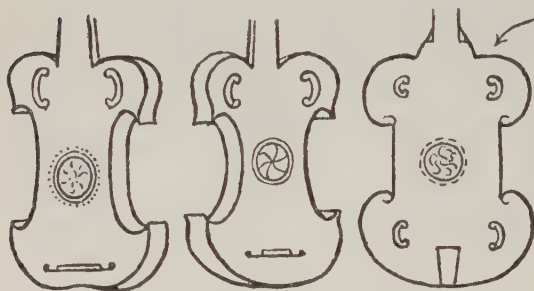
All the above bows have screw nuts.

(NOTE. There is no evidence to warrant any positive statement as to whether these screw nuts are the original states or conversions. My considered opinion is: that *c*, *d*, and *e* are as they left their makers' hands; that *b* has had its present nut since it was first shortened—if, indeed, it really is a longer bow cut down; and that the nut of *a* is not the original fitting, but still belongs to a date not later than the turn of the seventeenth century.—G. R. H.)

APPENDIX VI

The form of viol shown in the illustrations of Virdung and Agricola must be regarded as a definite type in use in Germany and possibly in parts of Italy, at the turn of the fifteenth century. These illustrations have hardly been taken seriously by the majority of writers, except perhaps by Fétis, who boggled quite needlessly at the obviously accidental omission of the bridge. There is complete evidence for the essential accuracy of these designs in the art of the period. Several examples may be seen in a most useful publication which has appeared since this book passed the proof stage: *Geschichte der Musik in Bildern*, Leipzig 1929. The details are particularly well shown in the reproduction, on page 112 of that book, of Luca Penni's *Parnassus*. Some sketches to illustrate this point appear below.

Strings and other details omitted



Virdung

Agricola

Lucas Penni

From 'Parnassus'
of about 1540.
In the painting
the details are
very exact; the
belly is well
arched.

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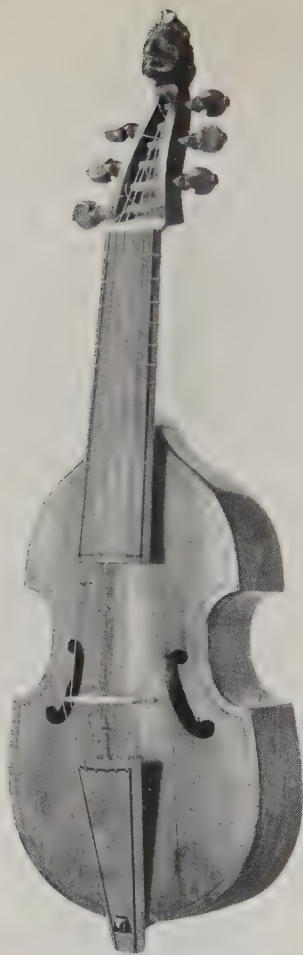
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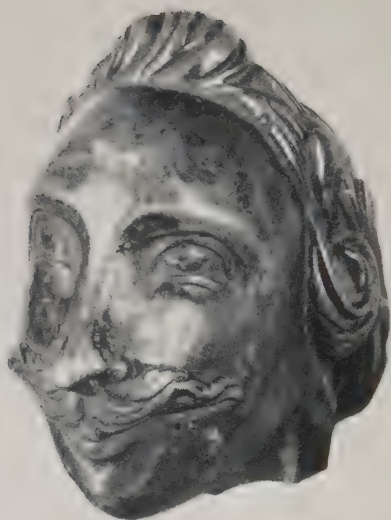
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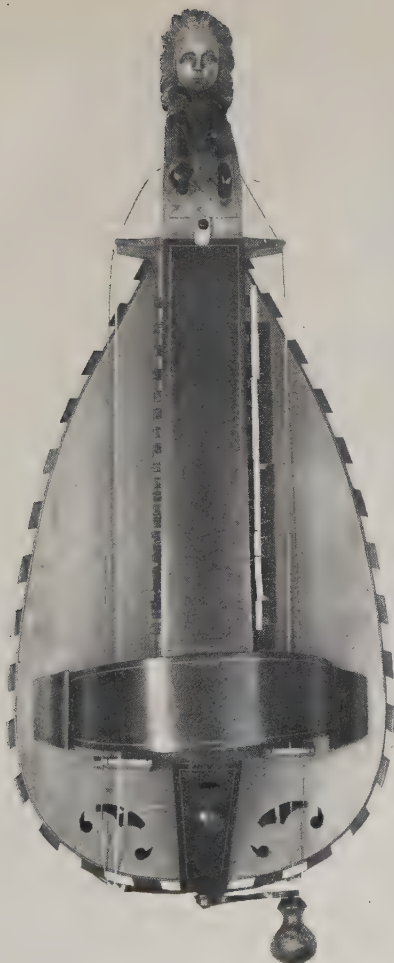
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